NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW.

No. CXVIII.

JANUARY, 1843.

ART. I. — 1. *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening.* By A. S. DOWNING. New York and London. Wiley & Putnam. 8vo. pp. 451.
2. *Cottage Residences, or a Series of Designs for Rural Cottages and Villas, with their Gardens and Grounds.* By A. S. DOWNING. New York and London. 8vo. pp. 187.

WE are glad to record the appearance of works like these; partly because they show, that there is already a demand for, as well as a want of, such guides in matters of taste, and also because the effect of reading such graceful and interesting essays is often to create a taste of the kind where none had previously existed. We find in this country, as we presume it is found in every other, that men always return from business and care, to look for their enjoyment in the presence of nature. There is a powerful instinct, which sends them homeward from those exciting pursuits, in which fortunes are gained or lost, to find that repose in quiet and contented activity, which no excitement on the stirring field of public action is ever able to bestow. Not only does the seaman come back from the ocean, thinking it a high privilege to sit down quietly in a cottage, the very one perhaps from which he ran away in his early days; the merchant, whether prosperous, or broken, if he has moral strength to throw off the burden, while he is yet able to bear it, applies him to the cultivation of the soil, where, if the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dividends are small, they are sure, which is more than can be said of any other investment, and where, without hazard of loss, he may secure that gain to his health and happiness, which no amount of wealth can buy. It is in pursuits of this kind alone, that politicians are able to break the force of their fall, and a fall is surely in store for them, unless they are cut off in the flower of their days. The wheel of public life is "all mutabilities and variations," and a constant succession of aspirants are lifted into the upper air for the sole purpose, as it would seem, of being dashed below. The country does not seem to take such reverses of public men very much to heart. The business of state finds new hands to do it, and all goes on as if nothing had happened; while the victims themselves, if they have the grace to reconcile themselves to the common lot, find that the green fields of retirement are better, on the whole, than the white mountains of honor, which they curse as heartily as David did those on which Saul and Jonathan had fallen.

But those circumstances which send a man into retirement, and place him in a condition for rural labor, do not necessarily give him the taste to improve his grounds, and make them grateful to the eye; so that he either consults his gain in all his efforts, or, if he does any thing for the gratification of the eye, is apt to be smitten with a fierce ambition of display, which is perhaps the most decidedly hostile influence that good taste has to encounter. This ambition is forthwith manifested in glorious architectural combinations. Athens and Palestine are laid under contribution to furnish columns and entablatures to disguise the honest mansion, but without success, for its homely, unpretending features look quietly out through all the pomp that surrounds it. We observe, that De Tocqueville and others, who notice this propensity in our countrymen, complain of these architectural ornaments, that they are made of perishable materials. To our eyes this is their crowning merit, and we should earnestly deprecate any change that should preserve them from swift decay. So much attention is given to the house, that very little can be spared for the grounds; or, more probably, the resources are exhausted in the process of building, and the mansion is compelled to stand finished, or not, as the case may be, without a leaf to cover its shame. In fact, this ambition of finery, which is essentially savage, is in-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

consistent with a quiet, natural, and gentle taste. That is the result of a cultivation which disowns and scorns ambition, and it is such a taste only that can produce any results in gardening satisfactory to the eye. Many are conscious of errors and deficiencies, who cannot tell what it is that offends them. But those, who are in the habit of analyzing their own impressions, know that nothing is pleasant in the landscape, which is not in harmony with nature. Lavish decoration is, of all things, most unnatural; so that these ferocious displays of architectural ambition, to which many of our countrymen are addicted, must be suppressed and abandoned, before a true taste can flourish and abound.

If any have been sufficiently manly and enlightened to avoid the ridiculous mistakes into which so many have fallen, there still has been a difficulty, arising from the want of proper guides. It is not always that one, who desires to keep within the bounds of good taste, knows what arrangements it would require. He could easily detect offences against it in the arrangements of others; but it is one thing to criticize, and another to execute. Some men, who have a nice and just discrimination with respect to these matters, have nevertheless no gift at all to construct the buildings, nor to plan the grounds, which their taste would approve. If they refer to similar works in other countries, they may find such as are well suited, doubtless, to the wants and circumstances of their proprietors; but transfer them to this land, in servile copies, made without regard to the peculiarity of climate, the difference of the accommodation required, or the natural scenery that surrounds them, and the same villa, which is beautiful in itself and in representations of it, becomes, as imitations are apt to be, a vicious enormity, unsuited to the wants of the owner, and offensive to every eye. The proprietor exalts himself in his first ecstasies, at the sight of the Babylon he has built; but the suspicion gradually comes over him, that, after all, he has not realized his bright vision. He cannot say, that he is himself quite satisfied with his costly exploits. His neighbours are less delicate in their expression of feeling. They see no reason for suppressing the opinion that his attempt is a failure; and, after striving in vain to ascribe their unfavorable judgment to envy, or some unworthy passion, he at last confesses in his heart that 't is just, only lamenting that he must keep company, through

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

life, with the unsightly buildings and plantations with which he has cumbered the ground. One reason, no doubt, of our countrymen having so little local attachment, is to be sought for in this want of attraction in the outward aspect of their homes. When time and death have changed the inmates of the domestic circle, there is little in the exterior which one is willing to see on those pictures which the memory delights to draw.

We apprehend that it might be found on examination, that the houses and places in which the gratification of taste was least thought of, are those which make the happiest impression upon the eye. If the artist would draw an American landscape, he rejoices not in the tall mansion, with its Grecian *façade*, and its kitchen after the manner of a tail in the rear; but rather in the steep-roofed work of antiquity, with its projecting upper floor, in which the obvious purpose of defence, against the snowstorms and savages of former days, give it the grace of fitness, if it has no other. The cottage, which never rejoiced in whiteness, but patiently bears the complexion which sun and tempests engrained upon it, is also an agreeable feature in the prospect to the artist's eye; and even the log-hut, set in an indentation of the forest, with no works of art, save blackened stumps of trees around, figures to advantage, because it pretends to nothing. Much does the self-satisfied proprietor wonder why the practised eye should descend to subjects so unworthy, when his palace, as fine as cornice and column can make it, is towering at their sides. But he dies without solving the problem to his own satisfaction, for it is not within the compass of possibility, that he should understand the beauty of fitness, and adaptation to place and circumstances, which he has himself been at so much expense to disregard.

We think that there are signs of a better taste about us. It is quite in the order of nature that first attempts should be falsely ambitious. But they may serve as a warning, if not an example; and, as they are too frail in their construction ever to be sanctified by the moss and weather-stains of antiquity, they will soon give way to others, not built in the eclipse of good taste, like themselves. The reform, too, can be general; for the indulgence of good taste is not expensive. It rather throws contempt on idle display, hardly

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ever admitting an ornament, simply because it is one, and always consults, in its arrangements, those wants of the possessor, which ambitious display is anxious to conceal and disregard. When good sense and good taste thus lead to the same result, and one may be consulted without any sacrifice of the other, there is no reason to fear that our countrymen will be blind to advantages once placed within their reach. It is not from any thing in their character that the false taste has grown; it is simply from ignorance of the true.

It is idle to make comparisons between this and other countries; but it is certain, that, in the facilities which it offers for these improvements, no one can excel our own. There is, indeed, a temptation growing out of this abundance. The great proportion of our country dwellings are made of wood, a material easily procured, and quite sufficient, so far as protection from the cold and dampness is concerned; but, on the other hand, exposed to the danger of conflagration, and sure of early decay. We are not certain, that its frailty is any objection to it in the minds of many of our countrymen. Such is the taste for adventure, and such the inducements to emigrate, offered by new and fertile regions, that there are few cases, comparatively, in which the son can be depended on to finish what his sire began; few, indeed, in which the son thinks of spending his days near the paternal residence of his father. Of course, but little concern is felt for the family mansion, which soon passes into the hands of strangers, or, if any interest in it remains, the least unpleasant change is that of time and decay. We rejoice to believe that this will be altered. The improved methods of cultivation now encouraged among us, are not means for increasing the fertility of the soil only, and making two blades of grass grow where but one grew before. They are rather civil and social improvements, enabling two members of the family to fix their residence where none could remain before, and, in process of time, to establish those local attachments, and gather those venerable and touching associations round them, in which our countrymen have been deficient, for want of the opportunity of forming them. In the neighbourhood of our cities, it is found, that a family can subsist on the returns of a few acres well tilled, better than on the produce of large farms, partially cultivated, as such estates are now. The

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

next result will be, that of building permanent habitations, on plans tried and approved by the experience of ages. The materials are everywhere abundant; and there are so many advantages, beside the gratification of taste, in these durable constructions, that houses of stone will hereafter become as common as frame houses are now. One good consequence of the waste and neglect of our forests, is to bring about this result. In our larger villages, at present, the cost of brick and wood is about the same; and, though stone is at present more expensive, the time is not distant when mechanical improvements will diminish the cost, and a large demand will create a proportionate supply.

The vegetation of our forests, also, is very favorable to that external embellishment of the grounds, which a dwelling requires, to make it pleasing to the eye. One error of our countrymen is, that they regard the house as the only or the chief thing; and, if they rejoice in what they consider a successful architectural exploit, they are as unwilling to veil its beauties by a single tree, as were our fathers, in the day when a grove, or a single trunk, might serve as a stalking-horse for an Indian marksman. This taste for nakedness, however, is passing away; and now the danger is on the opposite side; that of having trees set out in profusion, without regard to the shade required, or to those circumstances of position and adaptation, without which they sometimes disfigure the place which they are meant to adorn. In many public and private places we see them set in long files, as if the hint were taken from a military review. Where single trees and clumps judiciously distributed, would have a fine effect, the proprietor seems to borrow all his notions of beauty from the posts in a fence, or the buttons on a coat, and thinks it a serious misfortune if accident, or the decay of a few, breaks up his much-loved order. When he comes to the comprehension of the fact, that art can do no better than follow the lead of nature, and that it sins and fails, when it runs off into ambitious originalities of its own, he finds, that, with labor and expense comparatively light, and within narrow bounds, he can produce results of beauty, which he never dreamed of before, and on which his eye can rest with perfect satisfaction and delight. The sense of local attachment then, for the first time perhaps, opens upon his mind. Up to that time he has thought with pleasure of the fireside, and the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

circle within the dwelling; but the prospect without the walls has never, in his seasons of absence, come up before him. Now the fireside has little to do with place; it can be transferred across the continent, or the ocean, without breaking its charm. But the taste, of which we have spoken, makes the home a place; it becomes a local habitation; it becomes an important element in that grace of life, the love of country, which is not only itself an honorable feeling, but also the parent of many others, which should not be strangers to any manly breast.

The author of the works before us has judiciously aimed to inspire a taste for such improvements, as are within the reach of the great proportion of our people. We want no rules for parks and palaces, and happily we have no reason to fear the painful variety and contrast of condition which such luxuries, and the poor cottages that surround them, imply. There is a moral taste, which can find infinitely greater satisfaction in a landscape, where the uniform cultivation and improvement of every part, shows that all are prosperous and all equal, if not in their possessions, in what is better, the taste to appreciate the beautiful, and the means of making it their own. The attempts and failures to which we have alluded, which are so common everywhere, show that the desire and the means are not wanting; and, when they are accompanied by the taste to employ them to advantage, we shall no doubt find, not perhaps villas meant for show, but habitations suited to give pleasure to the inhabitants, as well as to strangers; places not made to exhibit, but rather to enjoy.

The reason why early attempts at such improvements are unsuccessful, is sufficiently plain. The pioneer, who subdues the native forest, is apt to be of the opinion, that he sees something too much of nature; as his whole business is to root out the woods and shrubbery which she has planted. He feels no gratitude to her for the plantations, which it costs him so much labor to remove; least of all, can he be brought to think it an improvement, when his successful warfare is over, to replace the trees with others, and to sink art in nature again. The natural aspect is associated in his mind with the poverty and hard struggles of his early days; while the angular cornfield, the unshaded pasture, and the checkered garden, remind him of that prosperity and plenty, which have long been the day-dream of his soul. Now, as all

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

beauty depends in a great measure on association, it is perfectly natural, that, in all his attempts at improvement, he should consult that which it gives him pleasure to see. In the minds of his children these associations have never existed; there is nothing to prevent them from receiving light upon the subject; they accordingly welcome the suggestions of true taste, as soon as they are presented.

With respect to domestic architecture, our author says well, that fitness is the first thing to be regarded; fitness, however, not simply with respect to convenience, but to size, aspect, warmth, air, and other circumstances, which are all important, and should be secured, as far as possible, in the arrangements of the building. In a city there is less choice in this respect; but in the country, where it is wholly under control, the common practice is, to make the chief apartments front the public road, even if it give them a northwestern exposure, which is the least desirable in most parts of this country. It has been a common practice, too, from time immemorial, to build houses for summer only, as if the inhabitants were to remain torpid during that season, which stretches through so much of the year, as to make the summer a small interlude, which needs but little preparation. This, however, is passing away; and the danger now is, that of contracting and crowding apartments, so that there shall be no room for comfort in them at any season of the year. Considering what our climate is, and is likely to be, the chief apartment of the family should look toward the morning sun; and the same situation, which gives it that advantage in winter, will save it from the fierce blaze of the sun in the summer afternoons. Many rules are here given for securing the convenience of every part of the dwelling, all of which are judicious and important, but which it is not necessary for us to set down.

Mr. Downing dwells on the expression of purpose in a building, which is a point sorely violated in a great proportion of our architecture. Who can tell, in these times, when every thing is so desperately Grecian, whether he is looking on a church, a bank, or a town hall? The private dwelling carries its own testimony with it, in the aspect of its chimneys; but these are generally made to appear like necessary evils, when they might be made to contribute much to the ornament of the building. In this respect the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

modern are very inferior to our ancient buildings. In some of the houses of the seventeenth century which yet remain, the chimney is graceful in its proportion, and offers a fine outline against the sky, while in modern houses it resembles a timber shooting upwards from the roof, studiously ugly, and as disproportioned as the art of man can make it.

We are less sure with respect to the colonnade, which this writer thinks an essential part of every inhabited building. It certainly is highly ornamental, and in a portion, though not, as he says, a considerable portion of the year, is a pleasant retreat for the family. Our summers are short, and there are few evenings in which one can be in the open air without danger. The same roof, which protects from the sun's rays at one season, may intercept them at another, when they would be welcome. If colonnades can be so arranged as not to darken the windows in the short winter days, they may be regarded as desirable in the climate of New England; and if the external aspect of the building is the first object, no house can afford to be without them. There is no such objection to balconies, terraces, and bay-windows. These are beautiful always, and everywhere, not simply as ornaments, but as signs and expressions of the refinement and grace of life.

The greater portion of readers will hardly sympathize with the author in his opinions as to the proper color of buildings, though they are, on the whole, appropriate and just. The American eye has become so accustomed to the white villa or cottage, with its dark-green Venetian windows, and their bright contrast with the foliage that surrounds them, that it will seem like a heresy to say, that good taste frowns upon this kind of ambitious decoration. Nor are we sure that it is always so. Nothing is finer than the pale marble of the vase or statue, looking out from its leafy cavern. The small white cottage has something of the same effect. It is only when the building is large, open, and partially shaded, that it seems to stand forth as if desirous to attract the beholder's eye; and in that case, it certainly is, like all ostentatious display, misplaced and offensive. The eye resents the attraction by which it is drawn toward them, and would fain sink them in the masses of foliage which almost every landscape supplies. As most houses require to be open and unshaded in front, at least, not to be buried in shadow, it

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

certainly is better to give them a color, harmonizing with the soft hue of the landscape, which may easily be done by almost any imitation of stone. Mr. Downing has given specimens of various tints of gray, drab, and fawn color, either of which is well suited to the purpose, and pleasing to every eye.

But without dwelling on these particulars, we wish to see a kind of rural architecture suited to this country. Every one is weary of the eternal Grecian, in which the architect is obliged to lower his roof till it is wholly unsuited to our regions of storm and snow; to suppress his chimneys entirely, or to hide them, with what art he may, in some ornamental part of the building; and, since the windows cannot be dispensed with, nor concealed, to put them just where they are wanted in open defiance of the rules which, in all other respects, he has treated with slavish regard. The Gothic too, so far as cottages are concerned, has nearly had its day. The sight of the well-fed, portly citizen in chivalrous armour would not be more unsuited to our present habits of thought, than the application of that style, with all its venerable associations, to the comfortable villa and the homely cottage, which always seem uneasy and out of place in such masquerades. The Tudor style, though much nearer to what is wanted in this country, and suggestive of associations, which, with such objects, are much more welcome, reminding us of the heartiness and hospitality which are or should be cherished in rural domestic life, still is not altogether in place in this new land. But there may be appropriate forms, not slavishly borrowed from any other, nor yet fastidiously rejecting any of their advantages, which shall be characteristic of life in this country, making the exterior expressive of that which is within; as, for example, the chimney, with the graceful column of smoke, shows that the cheerful wood fire is not yet given up; or the old fashioned *well-sweep* of the cottage, which shows, that modern improvements have not yet reached them.

We have not anywhere seen a style which is sufficiently appropriate to our uses, to answer for general imitation; and we fully agree with this writer, that it is not only desirable, but practicable, to produce an American cottage style, which shall be so well adapted to our wants, so harmonious with our landscape, and so grateful to the eye, as gradually to supplant all

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

others, and to become the prevailing domestic architecture in this country. In his fifth design, he has given a specimen of this kind, in the *bracketted* mode of building, which is sufficiently homely for any farm-house, and yet ornamental enough to be a beautiful object in almost any situation, particularly for the level ground, which is most common, and for which this plan is intended.

It is easy to see, that almost all the designs, which are given in this work, apply to buildings of a very unpretending kind. The body of the house, unfinished, resembles that of the barn. If the gable is furnished with Grecian columns, it will by no means be transfigured into a miracle of art; nay, more, it will wear its disguise with the ass's ears, in the shape of chimneys, thrusting themselves roughly through. If, on the other hand, it be decorated with crocketted pinnacles, it will neither be a cathedral, nor a chapel, and will wear a discontented aspect, as if the pretension was forced upon it sorely against its will. But if the proprietor be content to have it appear as it is, a dwellinghouse of moderate dimensions, with arrangements suited to the wants and convenience of the inhabitants, it is easy, not only to accomplish his purpose without any sacrifice in these respects, but to make these very things, which are now necessary evils, enter into the plan harmoniously, and please, instead of offending, the eye. The bay-window, with its balcony, will be a beautiful ornament to the parlour, both without and within. The roof can be extended at the eves and the gables, and, with brackets cut in graceful forms, to support it, will answer good purpose as a decoration merely, apart from the protection it gives to the sides of the building. The chimneys, if carried up with a view to appearing in separate flues above the roof, will be less likely to smoke, than at present, especially if they are circular within. With respect to this last improvement, we are glad to find, that chimney-tops cut in stone are now furnished in our cities; and bricks, in proper forms for the purpose, may be had in any part of the country.

The author well suggests, that, if the attention can be turned to that which is really beautiful in matters of art, it leads on to a better appreciation, and deeper feeling, of nature; and, as the construction of a dwelling is one of those concerns in which almost every man engages with earnest-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ness, arising from the impression, that it is to be his home for life, it is on this point that he will be most open to suggestions on the subject. Ornaments, connected with convenience, will gain his attention, when, simply as ornaments, he would treat them with utter disregard. In the arrangement of his apartments he will see a grace in fitness and proportion. As soon as this perception dawns upon him, he will throw from him the savage taste for finery, and begin to consult some principle of taste in the selection of his furniture and the color of his walls. He will learn to take offence at that heedlessness, which confounds the simple with the showy, puts right things in wrong places, and blends in violent contrasts those which ought to be kept apart.

When a new sensibility is thus awakened to appearances within the dwelling, he will begin to look abroad and around it with more discrimination than before; and, if the sunflower and peony are near neighbours to the daisy and heliotrope, in his garden, he will begin to inquire within himself, whether either gains any real advantage from the immediate vicinity of the other. So, too, with the foliage of the trees that happen to be near. He will begin to notice the graceful dignity of the elm, the firm grandeur of the oak, the tender gloom of the evergreen, and the pensive leaning of the willow. Where, in former days, he saw nothing but fuel and timber, he will find value, apart from domestic uses, in the expression of their forms, and the images which they awaken in his mind. Nor will it be long before he undertakes, by his own efforts, to produce those combinations which make the most pleasing impression. He will ascertain by experiment, where the rich velvet of the locust, the cheerful green of the plane-tree, the autumnal scarlet of the maple, and the blood red of the oak, can be set with the best effect. Without the least interference with his graver cares, indeed with a recreation, which gives him more energy for those pursuits that exhaust the frame or the mind, he can go on with this work of improvement; which in every sense deserves the name, since he refines his own taste, and quickens his sensibility, not only to external nature, but to every thing in the moral and intellectual world. Even if he gained nothing for himself, but the satisfaction which it is sure to give, his children will grow up with tastes and perceptions, to which his early days were strangers; and all ex-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

perience is false, if they are not better, as well as happier, in consequence of these powers and affections, which, growing with their growth and strengthening with their strength, will act with commanding influence on their destiny, not to make them artists or amateurs, but to raise them to the high standing of refined and cultivated men. Well may the children congratulate themselves on such an inheritance. It is more than wealth can bestow. Such a home is one of the dearest recollections they can carry with them through life; and, when they die, it is the last earthly vision which fades and lessens upon their hearts, as they depart to the land of souls.

The work before us, on the theory and practice of Landscape Gardening, is one which does credit to the writer; and the time is come when it is extensively needed in this country. There are few, comparatively, who have the means to employ professional skill, in laying out their grounds, though even this expensive accomplishment is fast growing in public demand; but there are very few, who have not brought up with them from youth some recollection of a garden, which, however simple, was the scene of their early enjoyment; and, accordingly, in arranging, in fancy, the paradise of their choice, they think of the garden as the chief luxury which wealth, when acquired, is to give them. As soon, therefore, as they feel able to realize the vision, they begin with their favorite plans; generally as coarse and rude as their first attempts in landscape painting would be, from their ignorance of the principles on which they should proceed. That defect may be supplied by such works as this, which suggest new ideas on the subject of beauty and the means of giving pleasure to the eye, which otherwise they would not have known. A great proportion of what has been done in this way is tasteless in proportion to its ambition; but the whole is but little; and there could not be a better time for such improvements to begin.

The natural style of gardening is now universally approved. We do not mean by that name an exact imitation of nature; there is often an error in this respect, similar to that which requires the sculptor to copy the exact costume by which his living original was deformed. What we want is, art following the lead of nature, and arranging and combining the different elements of the scene, in such a manner

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as to show the different effects of art and nature, blended harmoniously into one. There are situations, however, in which it is best to leave nature as it is; making no attempts at alteration, and simply clearing away whatever interferes with the prospect, or offends the eye. There are others, in which the botanical arrangement is desirable; so that every tree and shrub must stand by itself, the effect depending upon the beauty of individuals, placed as near to each other as possible, without losing their singleness of form. In the picturesque style, there must be a much greater variety of combination; the perfection of individual forms is not necessary, since the foliage of trees and shrubs is meant to be blended with other verdure, and the main thing to be regarded is the expression of the whole.

The chief requisites for producing fine effects in landscape gardening abound to profusion in every part of this country. There is no finer object than a flourishing tree. It bears every variety of expression, from the plain and lowly, to the majestic and commanding. In every season, trees are ornamental to the landscape; whether bearing the tender green of spring, the rich masses of summer foliage, or seen in winter with their clear outlines drawn upon the sky. They can be disposed in every variety of arrangement, whether clumps, thickets, groves, or single trees, and placed in such a manner, as to hide the unsightly parts of the prospect, with open vistas for the finer points of view. In our new regions, where the forest seems already too abundant, foreign trees can be introduced, in contrast, to vary the monotony of green. In the open vicinity of our cities, a deeper shade would be more desirable to the inmate of the dwelling, and more pleasing to the eye. In all cases the trees should form the background, against which the mansion is seen. If its form and proportions are graceful, they are set forth to advantage by this arrangement, while every thing can be hidden by it, that requires to be concealed. On the lawn before the house, trees of unusual shape, or rich foliage, and flowers, can be sprinkled everywhere, taking care to avoid that formal regularity, which is never found in nature, and which is instantly resented by the practised eye. Trees of various height should be grouped with a view to the upper line of foliage, to break up its uniformity; and those of smaller growth, on the outer edges, to connect it with the verdure of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the ground below. The thick belt should never be used, like a palisade, to surround the enclosure; but the line should be varied with projections and recesses, which disguise the extent of the estate, and excite the imagination of the beholder. In every case of improvement, the scene has a natural character, and the aim should be to follow that suggestion, and produce the effect desired, by deepening the expression which it already bears. Hints for these purposes are furnished in this work, which are illustrated by sketches so abundant and well drawn, that there is no excuse for any one, who is disposed to arrange his grounds with taste, and who relies upon this guidance, if he fails to do it with success. But these leading principles must be studied, in order to know how to apply them. Improvements are not to be boldly and hastily made, without taking pains to understand their application. Whoever will give the subject the time and attention it deserves, will soon master them, and he will rejoice the more in the success of his efforts at improvement, because they are so much his own.

One of the greatest defects in the American landscape, is the unsightly boundary which separates estates, or parts of the same estate, from each other; and one of the first things to be done, in the way of improvement, is to substitute the hedge for the fence, which can be done to as much advantage here as in any country, since the perpetual decay of the wooden barrier balances its cheapness at first, and the hedge, after the care of a few years, fully answers its purpose, and makes few other demands. Some prejudice has been excited against the hedge by the unsuitable trees that have been employed. The hawthorn is entirely unsuited to our climate. Its rich green is parched to brownness by our summer suns, and a borer, also, has of late seized upon it as its prey. But there is no such objection to the buckthorn, which is equally beautiful; and if the want of sufficient spine is brought against this tree, the cockspur or white American thorn is a sufficient defence for any enclosure, easily raised to sufficient strength, and equal to any shrub for the depth and richness of its green. For ornament merely, nothing can exceed the arbor vitæ; and, for protection, the honey locust may be cultivated into a boundary, which neither man nor beast would be easily tempted to break through.

Many judicious suggestions are here given for improving

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the natural surface of the ground; not to remove its unevenness and subdue it to a plain, but to heighten the native character of the scene by filling up rough hollows, removing unsightly hills and ridges, and bringing all the parts into easy connexion and full harmony with each other. Where the ground is impracticable for improvement, the various accessaries in which landscape gardening abounds may be easily thrown in, to soften abruptness, and melt down the discordant elements of the scene. With such means as this, the level surface, which is the most difficult of all others to manage, can be made to have the appearance of variety, without forcing nature by creating artificial hills and hollows, which would betray, by their embarrassed aspect, that they have no business there. Walks and avenues should be made in accordance with the surface. On a level surface the approach to the mansion need not be direct and formal. Some variety may be given by a graceful sweep, which will carry its own explanation to the eye; and those which run through the different portions of the estate should be rough or smooth, careless or labored, according to the scene through which they go.

There are many excellent suggestions for the treatment of water in landscape gardening; and, as ours is a land of rivers and fountains, where there are few estates of any extent, without a stream running through them, or so near, that a supply of water is at hand, such directions are greatly needed; since the improver is too apt to begin with artificial forms, and in the creation of them he effaces those natural features, which afterwards he would give much to restore. The straight watercourses and circular ponds, which he parades so ambitiously, as his taste grows more correct become wearisome to the eye. For a time he suspects all parts of the scenery, rather than his own expensive efforts; but at last the conviction forces itself upon him, that all he has been doing would have been better left undone. The streamlet should be suffered to wander, or, at least, seem to wander, at its own sweet will. The cascades and waterfalls should appear, as if the hand of nature formed whatever masonry may be hidden below. The sheets of water should not bear the marks of mathematical calculation; but the shores should have natural bays and indentations, and patches of verdure should occasionally overhang the edge.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We cannot follow the author through his remarks on the embellishments, which landscape gardening either admits or requires. They are sensible and well expressed, and will leave no apology, and perhaps no taste, for those costly enormities by which many ambitious places are disfigured. Jets and fountains perhaps will not be common, though in proper situations they are eminently beautiful and refreshing in the summer day; but rustic summer-houses, bridges, seats, and arbors, will everywhere be in request. There is no landscape in the country where they will not be an appropriate ornament, and the ease with which they are constructed places them in every man's reach. There is no greater public benefactor, than those who bring such indulgences home to the poor. They have taste, as well as the rich; and it is well for all that they should share in the power to indulge it.

We dismiss these works with much respect for the taste and judgment of the author, and with full confidence, that they will exert a commanding influence. For this purpose our recommendation shall not be wanting. They are valuable and instructive; and every man of taste, though he may not need, will do well to possess them.

ART. II. — 1. *Sketches Abroad and Rhapsodies at Home.* By a Veteran Traveller. 2 vols. 8vo. London. 1836.

2. *At Home and Abroad.* By RODERICK O'FLANAGAN. 2 vols. 8vo. London. 1836.

3. *Pictures of Life at Home and Abroad.* By the Author of Tremaine. 2 vols. 1838.

4. *Sketches at Home and Abroad.* By Mrs. JAMESON. 2 vols. 1839.

ONE of the chief advantages of the late Ashburton treaty, that great healing measure between England and this country, is the liberty which it has given to the expression of international opinion. This is quite as important in a moral sense, as

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

freedom of trade could be in a commercial one. While chances of a rupture existed, we were, on both sides of the ocean, obliged to maintain a strict conventional reserve, a kind of armed neutrality, as regarded our reciprocal views of our relative social systems. We were compelled to submit to the cruel privation of not speaking either well or ill of our neighbours, for such now are England and America to all intents and purposes. Blame would have been ascribed to prejudice. Praise would have been called truckling. We could neither find fault nor give approval. Forbearance became, more than ever, one of the decencies of life. Thus many of the follies of both the Old World and the New for a long time escaped whipping; while their respective merits were "unhonored and unsung." With the exception of one or two catch-penny productions, poetry and prose were doomed alike to silence. No ungenerous pasquinade or stilted panegyric was published, from any source worthy of even a passing notice. We, among the host of periodical writers, have been forced to lay aside many papers on British topics until now that the happy consummation of our long-cherished hopes allows us to speak out, in all the cordiality of friendly intercourse.

We are no longer restrained by delicacy, or the fear of misapprehension, from opening the sluices of censure, or pouring forth the streams of eulogy. An equalization of the currency, — to use a popular illustration, — has taken place. England may now, without wounding our sensitiveness or raising our ire, read us lessons on conduct, criticize our institutions, quiz our manners, expose our errors, — play the Dickens with us, in short; while we, on the other hand, may freely give the "retort," courteous or uncourteous as taste may dictate, and unhesitatingly enter on a task, which a few months ago we should have shrunk from undertaking at all.

With this brief preface we offer the following observations to our readers. To English and Americans both, as far as our circulation extends, they will display a state of society of a very peculiar and curious construction, widely different from that which prevails in the United Kingdom or the United States; one which leads foreigners, unacquainted with England, to most erroneous and unjust conclusions; one which it behoves travellers in Europe to examine and under-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stand ; at least all who share with us in that respect and regard for the English character, that is inherent in the race from which we have all sprung, and that inspires us with a deep interest in the honor of our common stock. We trust, however, that, as the truth of our remarks cannot be questioned, their spirit may not be mistaken ; and that, received wherever they may be, they will be taken in good part. It may be necessary to remark, that on the continent of Europe all British subjects, no matter from what part of the empire they come, are confounded in the general term *English ;* and in this sense we have used it. On the other hand, the English people apply the word *abroad* in common parlance as we do in this article, to the continent of Europe alone.

Few phrases are better calculated to excite a searching inquiry into cause and effect than the hackneyed one " at Home and Abroad." Yet the illogical profusion with which it has been applied and commented on in England for the last twenty years has not led to results of a value at all corresponding to the interests and the feelings involved in it. The scattered remarks of tourists and essayists, on the state of English society and the aspect of English character on the continent, have been most contradictory ; and, even when correct and to the point, the want of condensation renders them of little worth. But were some ingenious compiler to select from the records of modern travellers, the passages which bear on the subject, we venture to say that a volume might be produced, which would deeply shock the pride that Englishmen are so fond of calling national. Facts are stubborn things ; and with a host of them bearing on one point, and a vast number of concurrent authorities, it is impossible for the candid and truth-loving part of a nation to resist their evidence. And, as the English abroad derive many of their peculiarities from their previous condition at home, we will briefly and cautiously consider what manner of persons, while in England, those are, relative to whom, after they remove themselves to the Continent, we intend to say so much.

A country containing in round numbers 25,000,000 of inhabitants, 45,000,000 of acres of cultivated land, a grand total of capital represented by all the property of Great Britain and Ireland estimated at £4,000,000,000 ; paying annual interest on the public debt to the amount of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

£28,000,000, with a disposable revenue of £26,000,000 more ; exporting annually produce and manufactures to the value of between 40 and 50 millions sterling, — and such a country, if there be any truth in figures, is the United Kingdom, — forms a field of vast dimensions for the exercise of speculative philosophy. The benefits and the abuses of power, the useful or baneful effects of wealth, the influence of rank, the results of industry, civilization, in fact, on a great scale of experiment, had never yet so many elements combined so advantageously for a fair and infallible testing of its merits and its faults. The insular situation of the country, protecting it from the contagion of foreign vices ; its great commercial relations with the rest of the world, facilitating the introduction of all foreign improvements ; a form of government universally admitted to be well adapted for their developement ; perfect freedom for religious thought; a wide latitude for political action ; a boundless range for every theory of morals, — such are the advantages of the British empire, towards the establishment of a social system, which, like the political constitution of the country, though not written down into a formal code, ought to present a whole of practical wisdom and virtue, for the people's pride and the world's example. It is not our intention to enter into the inquiry as to whether the result has or has not been attained. It would be indeed an extensive treatise that could embrace an analysis of the social system of England. Neither shall we examine at large the theories of the causes in which national character has its rise.

We therefore take the English character as we find it, whether creating, or arising out of, the institutions with which it is identified and coeval. The fluctuations which both have undergone for centuries, have nothing to do with our present inquiry. It is their actual and living aspect with which we have to deal. That the frame-work of society in England presents many points of weakness needs no demonstration to those who have impartially compared it with that of other countries. Nor does this by any means imply that imperfections " abroad " may not form counterparts to those (speaking in the English sense) " at home." But it is positively true, that, with many advantages superior to those of other countries, and those chiefly depending on a greater degree of wealth, the errors in the plan of social polity estab-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lished in England are more inimical than those to be found elsewhere to the social enjoyment which is the main ingredient of happiness.

To attempt to explain away the web of prejudices tangled round the English character, would be as fruitless as an effort to unravel the fibrous roots of the oak, its noble and appropriate emblem. Like them they form part of its very existence ; are fed by the same sap ; and are, perhaps, as necessary to the growth and greatness of the branching structure above them. The main strength of a nation very often consists in its prejudices. But that which gives strength does not always produce happiness. The wholesome training for muscular exertion is far from an agreeable appropriation of the hours intended by nature for domestic enjoyment. So, the culture and nourishment of a disdainful pride, — the cardinal sin of the English character, — though giving Britons power in a contest with their foes, militates sadly against the comforts of their intercourse with each other.

Were this national pride confined to the aristocratical orders its ill effects would be less flagrant. The high-pressure engine of refinement is always furnished with a safety-valve against the dangers of explosion. Good manners modify, if they cannot neutralize, the mischief of corruption. But, when the errors of the great are adopted by the vulgar, every part of the body politic feels it more or less ; and, as retail dealers adulterate wine, until what was at first only flavored becomes at last deleterious, so do the hucksters of gentility degrade the lofty bearing of high life. Reversing the process of defecation, the more it is filtered the more impure it becomes. What was dignity at court is arrogance in the city. The *Lafitte*, which was dashed with *Hermitage* at Bordeaux, is poisoned with brandy at the London docks. The puissant woof of oligarchical *hauteur* is unravelled to a coarse thread. And the proud class, which formerly gave its tone to the national mind, now sees itself confounded in the general dislike provoked by each vulgar gradation.

The deterioration of character, consequent on this abuse of an originally noble quality, is immense. It is not merely, that the ungraceful caricaturists of high rank become ludicrous and are despised. The evil does not evaporate in antic parodies ; it sinks into the public heart. No man but

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the nobleman is proud of "his order" in England. He alone is alive to the dignity of his station; and it is therefore alone the order of nobility, and the family connexions among the gentry, who form with them an almost exclusive circle, that can uphold a free and unrestrained position. The inferior classes are to blame if this ever degenerates into undue assumption. If *they* knew their own intrinsic value, and maintained their place with independent originality, the structure of society would present a whole of masculine and refined proportions. But their grotesque imitation mars the entire plan, and drives them into extravagance of living and a burlesque affectation of style.

It is most frequently in the very highest orders, that we meet with an easy bearing. The persons composing them can venture to give loose to an unconstrained suavity, because they fear no rivalry. Their place is so marked by distinctive title, or by the technical "courtesy" which stands proxy for it, that they are safe from all undue familiarity or injurious misconception. But all, below the very highest order and above the very lowest, are in an eternal struggle for a superiority of conventional station, with millions of competitors. Meanwhile the amiable sociability of nature becomes perverted; the milk of human kindness is turned with drops of gall; and the waters of bitterness flood the whole extent of would-be fashionable life.

One of the most serious drawbacks to national improvement is the proneness of eminent individuals to flatter the mass. Some of the greatest writers of England have done the greatest mischief by inflated tributes to the national character. Bacon boasted that it was observed, that "of all nations, the English are not to be considered subject, base, or taxable," while the people quietly bore the yoke of an absolute monarchy and arbitrary exactions, with daily exposure to forced subsidies, benevolences, and wholesale confiscations! And be it remarked, that, about the same time, Grotius "observed," in his "Annals," that "the Englishman obeys like a slave, and governs like a tyrant."

Milton might be better excused than the illustrious panegyrist before quoted, when he spoke of the English as "men *ever* famous and foremost in the achievement of liberty,"—for his mind was, at the moment, ripe with the fulness of political freedom, the immediate flavor of which imparted

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

itself to his historical memory, and merged the past in the time in which he lived.

Addison, again, in pompous doggerel, exclaims, —

> " 'T is Liberty that crowns Brittania's isle,
> And makes her barren rocks, and her bleak mountains, smile."

While Burke, to wind up those encomiastic tirades by his fulgent bombast, proclaimed, in the very heyday of borough-mongering corruption and public servility, that, "in England we have not yet been embowelled of our natural entrails. We feel within us, and we cherish and cultivate, those inbred sentiments, which are the faithful guardians of our duty, the true supporters of all liberal and manly morals; . . . . . because all other feelings are false and spurious, and tend to corrupt our minds, to vitiate our primary morals, and to render us unfit for rational liberty."

It was thus, that the greatest writers, of all shades of political opinion, poured down doses of flattery into the open throats of the intoxicated people, or held up this false character of perfection before them; on the principle which made the Vicar of Wakefield place his wife's flattering epitaph over the mantelpiece in her lifetime. No wonder that the national head of England, like the head of almost every other nation, and from the like causes, has been turned; that her sons came to believe themselves born with an instinct of virtue and wisdom; and that, in spite of statistical and moral proofs of increasing crime and social subserviency, they were and are the best and freest people in the world.

It is unquestionable, that from the class which is the least strict in morals, and the least independent in spirit, the hundred thousand English who yearly "go abroad," are drawn. The good, plain, honest-minded millions, composing the mass of the rural population, or the sober citizens, who frequent the temple for love of the Deity and humbly practise what the preacher recommends, furnish scanty contingents to the emigration; or they absent themselves from home for a period too short to entitle them to be classified among "the English abroad." Neither do the members of the higher orders, with few exceptions, domiciliate themselves in foreign countries for a period sufficiently long to give them a place among those continental colonists, with

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whom we have now to deal. No. It is from that incongruous mass of individuals, who either float on the surface of society, or are wrenched from their moorings in it by some acts of imprudence or accidents of misfortune, that the towns of France, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, and Germany, are thronged, enriched, animated, and, with regret we must admit, often disgraced. For that promiscuous crowd, being held together by no firm cement of religious feeling, no solid foundation for real principles of conduct, frequently falls into a pharisaical licentiousness, marvellous to the natives, whom it unceasingly reprobates as publicans and sinners.

There is, probably, no subject of vital interest to the community, on which the generality of Englishmen are so thoroughly agreed, as the imperfection of the system of English education, in the universities, public schools, and private seminaries. For half a century the press has teemed with treatises on the subject, which has repeatedly attracted the attention of Parliament, and has, indeed, been a matter of national complaint from the days of Milton. The educational plan of the public schools has been in a trifling degree improved. But it still continues essentially narrow and illiberal, even in reference to the time when they were instituted; inadequate and absurd as respects the present. Independent of the deficiency, in many points, of moral instruction, which is the mainspring of education; setting aside the evils of fagging, flogging, and bullying; it can scarcely be denied, that the absence of all instruction in the living languages of Europe is altogether inexcusable at the present day. And to this glaring defect must be attributed much of the inconvenience, and not a few of the errors, into which Englishmen fall, or are betrayed, during their continental travels.

To classify by their motives for emigration, the English who inhabit the Continent, — taking into view the many gradations from the men of fortune to the mere adventurers, — would be quite impossible. But it may be safely asserted, that not one in a hundred of those who quit England for the first time, possesses a just notion of the people among whom they are about to pitch their tents for a season, or, it may be, to settle themselves for life. There is matter neither for wonder nor reproach in this. It has

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been the consequence of the advantage taken of the insular position of England, to cherish a general state of ignorance among the people, in regard more particularly to their "lively neighbours," as the French have been long, with contemptuous courtesy, called.

We will not accumulate quotations, to prove how British poets have fostered the error. But the following portrait, (from Johnson's "London,") coarse and exaggerated, even for the period of its appearance, is very nearly the model on which an untravelled Englishman to-day would build his notion of Frenchmen and French character.

> "All that at home no more can beg or steal,
> Or like a gibbet better than a wheel;
> Hissed from the stage, or hooted from the court,
> Their air, their dress, their politics import.
> Obsequious, artful, voluble, and gay,
> On Britain's fond credulity they prey;
> No gainful trade their industry can 'scape,
> They sing, they dance, clean shoes, or [*catgut scrape*].
> All sciences a fasting Monsieur knows,
> And, bid him go to hell, to hell he goes."

It is thus that a false picture of the Continental, but more particularly of the French, character has been held up to the English mind, throughout centuries of rivalry and war; and it is by slow degrees, indeed, that the true colors are beginning to appear. The English, going abroad with erroneous opinions, actually make the newly seen people what they were predetermined to find them, as prophecies so often bring about their own fulfilment. For the French, acute, prompt, and clear-sighted, discover at a glance how they are looked on by the new comers; and, from a spirit of counteracting reciprocity, they treat as fools, those who believe them to be rogues; and turn to their own profit the ignorance by which they are condemned without trial.

It is a great mistake to judge of the character of a nation by its treatment of foreigners. This is a case of exception. It is as often a consequence as a cause. And it should be borne in mind, when one thing follows another (like the effect we have just traced from what provoked it), that every sequence is not a consequence. Darkness follows light in the succession of the laws of nature. But one light may succeed to another, without any violation of natural results. So, when foreigners act towards Englishmen in ways

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that appear unworthy, the latter would do well to reflect, that their own conduct may have been the provocation; and that, when even a totally different course from the usual one occurs, they ought not to suppose it a variation from the national character, assumed for some sinister purpose. But Englishmen, newly launched on the sea of travel, rarely pause to take an observation. They are too much filled with the considerations of self, to allow time for any other. And they pursue their course, thinking nothing more required for a prosperous voyage, than gold for their ballast and self-importance by way of sails.

The English population abroad fluctuates considerably; and occasional exceptions are found to the general features it presents. But it is marvellous to mark the strong family likeness which pervades the mass; and, to see how very similar the construction of society, and the habits of temporary, or permanent settlers, in any one given place, are to those in any other.

The English character is so much based on imitation, that it rarely shows the striking contrasts which constitute originality. We see whole masses of English men and women apparently the same in habits of thought and action. Each class apes the one next above it, in dress, manners, and opinions. The very costume is the same in all the ranks. The lady hands over her old gowns to the lady's maid; who, in her turn, disposes of them to an inferior servant; and so they go down, as long as the rags hang together, till the beggar in the streets wears raiment of the same cut and pattern as that of the duchess.

Not so on the Continent. Both in great matters and in small independence is much more prevalent. Every rank has its respective style of dress, and would consider itself disgraced by adopting another's. The servility of tone, inspired by deference to colossal fortunes, has little comparative nourishment. The mind is not cramped by the routine drudgery of classical study, unmitigated by general literature and the arts. Virtual equality is the prevalent principle. Each man follows his own bent. There is a constantly occurring variety of character and manners. Every one, in fact, seems more or less an original. But in England it is the high patricians who give the tone to all below them. Rank after rank, becomes infected with their *morgue*. The

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

middle classes are tainted with it throughout. And that portion of them, who are by prescription admitted to the banquets of the great, are like the prolific tribe of insects called Aphides, which receive their color from the quality of the plant on which they feed.

The conclusion to be drawn from these remarks is, that although, in reference to each other, the English people are very much alike, they appear to other people, whom they so little resemble, a nation of originals; while foreigners have so many distinctive, personal peculiarities, that, even when individually contrasted with each other, every man may be called an original.

English families living abroad, are, in a great majority of instances, possessed of a certain income, derivable from some sure source at home, sufficient for their support, independent of any professional or chance pursuit, connected with the foreign country they may fix in. And this fact accounts for that air of entire independence and indifference, so common among them, in reference to the people among whom they fix themselves.

It is next to be observed, that not one, perhaps, in a thousand families, starts from home, with the intention of remaining, for life and death, in any one given place abroad, or with any perfectly defined place of settlement. Pleasure, economy, and the education of children being the great objects of almost all, the voyage they start on is a voyage of discovery; and their choice of a residence is almost always the result of chance, the probability and great likelihood of a change being always in their mind. From these causes, it results that scarcely any of the emigrants have any strong hold on any particular locality, from ties of affection or dependence. They hire their houses, either furnished by the month, or unfurnished for short terms, — "three, six, or nine years" being the almost invariable wording of the leases; and few tenants contemplate, when they sign their agreements, a longer sojourn than the shortest of those periods.

The consequence of all this is, to make those temporary tenants looked on, by themselves and others, as mere "birds of passage"; to give them loose habits of domestic arrangement, and uncertain feelings towards those they associate with, whether it be the natives or their own compa-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

triots. None of the links that form a social chain exist in a community so constructed. Independent of each other as to pecuniary resources, unconnected in interests, divided in opinions, and without any common plan of social polity, they are bound together by ties of gossamer. Coming from a country the wealthiest in the world, in all the external and superficial advantages of life, — that is to say, in comforts, conveniences, and elegancies, — they look little below the surface of things in the land they go to live in; and they see so much inferiority in these outward and visible signs, as to satisfy them that they are themselves of a race far superior in all the better attributes of civilization. They rarely examine the qualities of heart and mind, which raise the people of the Continent to so high a level of enjoyment, — the absence of factitious wants, the philosophy of domestic management, the richness of home affection, that blessing that passeth show.

From this mistaken view, and the contempt it generates, comes indifference towards others, and too often carelessness of themselves. They acknowledge no immediate standard of moral conduct, no tribunal of public opinion, no neighbourly "board of control." Every one forms a line, — and few a straight line, — of conduct for himself. Every one constitutes himself a judge, — and rarely a just one, — of his neighbour. An undisciplined extravagance pervades the whole. All the little passions are let loose, without any of those counteracting checks that influence a community which is restrained to a certain circle, and which knows that to bear and forbear is not only an impulse of generosity, but a duty of self-preservation. The English abroad, are united by no such salutary principle. To swear eternal friendship on a week's acquaintanceship, and to cast off a constant associate on an hour's notice, are every day events. The familiarity which they practise with each other has none of the delightful tone of a long-cherished intercourse. It is but a necessity of their false position. Here to-day and gone to-morrow, they have no time to let companionship ripen into confidence. They must force an intimacy into unnatural growth; and, either mistaking or misnaming its nature, call it friendship. Such friendship as this, is a flower which gives no fragrance in its blooming; and which is torn up and flung to the winds without a sigh.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

When the English settlers choose their locality, the great objects of their solicitude are to select the persons whom they are to know, and to avoid those whom they should not know. Wedded to the system which unhappily prevails at home, *appearance* is the test which regulates their choice. Little inquiry into the real respectability, the essential "whereabouts," of those around them, is entered on. But many questions are put, as to the fortune, the connexions, the way of life (that is to say, the dinners and *soirées*), of the various families. Letters of introduction to some members of this society most generally put them in the way of gaining information. But, ten to one, the information is false or prejudiced, influenced by pique, or jealousy, or some other element of the uncharitableness, which taints the whole. The bewildered inquirer is thus often led into serious scrapes, rushing into intimacies which it soon becomes advisable to break up, and avoiding acquaintanceships which it becomes too late to cultivate when they are discovered to be desirable. These evils are inevitable in the larger cities, where there are materials for selection; for the English society is sure to be split into *cliques*, and *coteries*, and sets, avoiding and despising, or affecting to despise, each other.

In the smaller towns, where the settlers can make no choice at first, but must visit *all*, they are sure to discover, before an interchange of cards takes place, or at any rate at the very first *soirée* they "assist" at, that quarrels, calumnies, and fierce estrangements disfigure the whole round of social life.

Quickly disgusted with this state of things, in which they are sure, by and bye, to become participators, in their own despite, they seek out a less objectionable circle. Picking up some chance visiters among the native residents, (invariably, by the way, called "foreigners" by the English abroad,) they make fawning advances to those, the best portion of whom stand aloof from, while the disreputable laugh at — and live on them. It is really mortifying, to every one of Anglo-Saxon blood, to observe the estimate formed of the English character by "foreigners," who attribute to the nation at large, defects which are but conventional results from the false positions of individuals.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It may be safely said, without disparagement or libel, that an immense majority of the English abroad have never been in habits of extensive or familiar intercourse with the nobility at home. The exclusive system of the latter class puts a bar between itself and that which furnishes those Continental contingents. And when they find themselves all at once in the "fatal facility" for titled acquaintanceship which the Continent affords, is it surprising that they play fantastic tricks, while they travesty high life? When such persons get into daily intercourse with a crowd of Continental *noblesse*, it is by no means strange that they should misunderstand the latter and forget themselves. They cannot argue by comparison. They know nothing of the philosophy which teaches that wealth and poverty should not be estimated by positive proofs alone; that what men want is as much to be taken into account as what they possess; and that the nobleman of small income on the continent, may be in reality a richer man than the affluent Lord in England. Seeing nothing of the great wealth, or the patronizing arrogance, which was associated with their notions of nobility, they consider it as shorn of half its beams. Ignorant, or unbelieving, of Dryden's definition,

> "The nobleman is he, whose noble mind
> Is filled with inborn worth,"

they view as a defect the unconstrained suavity, which is the most pleasing attribute of high rank. With the vulgar-minded (but with them alone) "familiarity breeds contempt." And those imbued with that worst vulgarity which is born of the want of self-respect, believe a haughty bearing to be the legitimate type of birth and title. They are thus led into a labyrinth of errors. Worshipping the symbol rather than the faith, the absence of the one is taken as evidence of the want of the other. The good breeding of the foreign noble is considered want of dignity, — that favorite word of the under-bred; and the unembarrassed simplicity which they hold so cheap, is thought less indicative of polish and fashion than their own painful uneasiness to be at their ease.

But, notwithstanding this, they defer to and worry with their intimacy the very persons whom they so undervalue. And why? Simply from their pride, in having a stupid marquis

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

or antiquated duchess on their visiting list ; in being able to write to their friends, and to say to themselves, — ay, even to themselves, for that is audience enough for vanity, when no larger is at hand, — that they associate with nobility.

And when a travelling group of English aristocracy passes through, or a straggling family stops for a winter in some small capital, or rests for the summer in a watering-place, what *empressement* is lavished by those who live on the excitement of wriggling into high society ! How the servile herd, more base than the *servum pecus* of poetry, flock round each new arrival, and load the table with visiting cards and invitations ! How they strain every nerve in bending sycophancy ! Piety, modesty, learning, and all the other really respectable qualities of our nature, might lie neglected for ever, by those whose attentions would be given to the most worthless of mankind, in a direct ratio with their place in the table of precedence, or their rank in the Red Book.

The system of society adopted and acted on by the English abroad must naturally be much affected by the example of those, who stand officially and by prescription at its head. And the greatest check to their less reputable tendencies is, undoubtedly to be found in the respectability of conduct of the English diplomatic and consular corps.

It must be admitted that the class we now speak of have great claims on indulgence, if individuals in it do at times show a little unbecoming pride. Their forbearance is tried with sore temptations. They are very much spoiled by other people, and they have so much in their power, in the small matters of social intercourse, so much to communicate or withhold in the way of news, they are so often appealed to as arbiters or deferred to as dictators, that they may be excused if they occasionally descend from their stations of political utility, to be the patriots of a *set* or the pets of a *coterie*.

The British mercantile settlers, a large and influential body of men, may be designated, by wholesale, as the phalanx which redeems the errors and sustains the honor of national reputation, on the long-extended line of Continental coast, from Cronstadt to Cadiz. We have no means of ascertaining the numbers of this class of emigrants. But, though they

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bear a small numerical proportion to the whole, they combine a vast amount of its intelligence and worth. It is lucky for England, that the enterprise and industry of the community at large have induced so many fair representatives of her nobler qualities to push their operations into foreign countries, and, by the proofs they afford of national integrity, to neutralize the impression forced on the Continental mind by the spurious "gentility" of their idle and ill-conducted countrymen. The high standing of the English commercial houses of Antwerp, Bordeaux, Hamburg, Oporto, Leghorn, and other towns, is notorious. But their commercial credit is not greater than their social value. They generally rank with the foremost of the native firms in influence. They accumulate large fortunes with unblemished character. A dishonest failure is rarely heard of among them. They form an admirable race of citizens in their adopted countries; and they hand down from father to son the proud consciousness of their English, Scotch, or Irish origin, even when losing after successive generations the accent or peculiar manners of the stock they spring from. Were all the English abroad of this stamp our task might end here. But we have still other portions of the picture to describe, before we completely develope the contrasts of light and shade.

The professional tribes of England are not slack in sending out supplies to swell the crowd of make-shift adventurers. We are happy to state, that, among those necessarily confounded under that head, many exemplary persons are to be met with. But, although these exceptions are more than are actually required to prove the rule, they are by no means so numerous as to leave it doubtful, that they *are* the exceptions.

"Law, Physic, and Divinity" being overstocked at home, a plentiful surplus of long-tried practitioners is drawn off to the Continent, consisting not only of those who, from various occult causes, find it convenient to "change their skies," as Horace says, but also of the junior members of sundry degrees of merit, and not unfrequently of the looser pretenders to professional distinction, unhonored with any degree at all. This last observation applies more particularly to the English medical men, who swarm in the Continental capitals, and of whom two or three are sure to be gathered

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

together in almost every town, where a few hundred of their compatriots have a local habitation. But we have also heard of impostors, in the guise of clergymen, holding forth from the pulpit and dealing out damnation to their fellow-men, with all the confidence of official competency, being all the while unauthorized to preach even the healing consolations of the Gospel.

We know not on what principle law is granted the precedence in the copartnership which unites the three professions according to the common phrase. But in compliance with precedent, (the great incubus upon our jurisprudence, be it observed in passing,) we allow the profession of the long robe its admitted priority. To make *honorable* mention of all the English lawyers, who for five and twenty years past have practised conveyancing (in its multifarious shapes) on the Continent and on their countrymen, is not within the limits of any conscience less elastic than Indian rubber. We cannot stretch ours, as a vast majority of those worthies would stretch a point. Here and there a "gentleman" attorney, — *rara avis* in Paris, — is no doubt to be found. And very valuable is such a phenomenon to many, who owe a banishment from their native land to those misfortunes and miscalculations, which too often confound the victims with the wretches by whom they have been robbed or ruined. But in many, if not in most, instances, the prowling practitioners, who make foreign countries the scene of their skill, and their banished fellow-Britons their prey, are creatures who have been struck from the roll, or who have escaped from "the rules," — our legal readers will understand these technical phrases, — and who earn a dirty livelihood abroad, at the expense of unfortunate persons, who have been forced from home by the malpractices of themselves and their like. This class of impure animals, which scents out the embarrassed emigrant as the crow scents carrion, forms but a small item in the total of the English abroad. The mischief they do is chiefly confined to their fellow-countrymen. Acting as go-betweens with the spendthrift and the money-lending-agents in the expedients by which profligacy drives a trade, and to which honest poverty is often driven as a means of subsistence, these harpies play a subordinate part in the drama of Continental disgrace. But the technicalities of the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stage may well be applied to them in carrying out the metaphor. They are the prompters, scene-shifters, call-boys, and property-men, of the *ci-devant* and *soi-disant* men of property, who sustain the principal characters in the vast strolling company of the English abroad. But the humane and philosophical measure for the abolition of imprisonment for debt, which has of late years passed through the British Parliament, has at once removed a reproach from English law, and struck a death-blow to much of the demoralization on which its lowest practitioners throve so long.

In dealing with physic (which comes next in order on the professional muster-roll), or rather let us say with physicians, we have more delicate ground to touch on, and more of it to go over, than during our passing incursion into the preserves of the law. The game we have now in view is far more plentiful. We believe we are rather under than over the mark in stating the English medical men in Paris alone at between fifty and sixty. There must be, consequently, some hundreds of them scattered over the various countries of the continent. Now, to any one of common sense, it is a matter of indifference, whether those gentlemen practise their profession under the authority of a diploma or by virtue of a license ; whether they have a university or a collegiate degree ; whether they be mere bachelors of physic or regular M. D.'s. Intuitive talent will raise the humblest in title, or the least eminent in routine, far beyond the empty quackeries of the schools. A clever apothecary is preferable to a stupid doctor. And many are to be found, who, from wielding the pestle and with just classical learning enough to read the *Pharmacopœia*, have left far behind in the professional race men, who have Homer and Horace by heart, who could analyze the ἱερὰ πικρά, and kill *secundem artem*.

Admitting this, we shall not be suspected of scholastic prejudices, in conscientiously denouncing the floating mass of false pretension, which, under the denomination of "the faculty," is mixed up with the English abroad. In every *coterie* a doctor or doctors will be found. No family can dispense with the advantage of their skill, or, as the case may be, be exempt from the evil of their ignorance. It is almost impossible to distinguish between the empiric and the man of science. The self-dubbed physician has the field as open to him as

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the regular graduate. The mere compounders of drugs lay claim to all the honors of medical science abroad ; and, like the Burgundians of old, proceed to the slaughter under the badge of Saint Andrew, the patron of the one and the special privilege of the other.

Checks are at times attempted by foreign governments against the influx of ignorant practitioners, but in vain. The English abroad resist to the death. They *will* follow their own system, and fee their own executioners. They are in this case to be pitied, certainly. The foreign physician lets them die ; the English doctor kills them. It is but a choice of evils ; and, like the Romans of old, they prefer falling at once, by the hands of their own freedmen, to lingering under the tardy butchery of the stranger.

But the case is too grave for a joke. There is nothing so sad as serious comedy. And among the professional buffooneries, every day played by those travelling quacks, such heart-rending consequences arise, so many widows and orphans and bereaved parents are the victims of their ignorance and cupidity, that while we thus place them in the literary pillory we cannot laugh at their grotesque appearance ; and, affixing the brand with the gravity of Tristan, we will not assume the levity of Petit Jean.

Fatal as is the practice of those doctors, in so many instances, against their patients, their professional wars against each other are far worse. Petty feelings should have small results. Envy ought to explode in mere ill-nature, and not take the bolder flight of persecution. But the latter is the almost invariable concomitant of the jealousies among the medical corps abroad. As soon as a new practitioner of any merit is seen to enter the sacred circle of established practice, he is beset on all hands by the intrigues of his brothers in physic, who often become his brothers in *law*. No stone (morally speaking) is left unturned by that portion, who are only (physically) fit to break them on the roads, for the purpose of ruining the interloper, who dares to trespass on their "beat." That he is duly licensed to slay is no security to him. He is looked on as a poacher, even though he has taken out his certificate. And no abuse of power, under the ancient game-laws of Europe, could exceed the worrying efforts which are at times put forth against the obnoxious new comer. All the *tracasseries* of local restriction are invoked ; every possible

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

technical obstruction brought into play. And it often happens, that a really able man is driven from the field by the dunces, to whom their unhappy patients are thus for a while turned over, bound hand and foot, for execution. In most of the Continental capitals, however, one English medical man of talent and experience is pretty sure to be met with, possessing discrimination enough to make allowance for variations of climate and modes of life, and to know that the practice of London or Liverpool may not exactly suit the climate of Lisbon or Naples.

The Episcopalian division of that "supernatural society of God, angels, and holy men," called, according to Hooker's definition, "the Church," is, in its natural parts, that is, the churchmen, largely represented on the continent of Europe. Whether the spirit of holiness accompanies them in their traverse of the British Channel, we do not undertake to decide. But that it departs from a great many of them, as soon as they touch the foreign strand, is a fact at once incontestable and grievous. We deprecate the slightest intention of irreverence, in speaking of the Established Church. Our respect for its integrity cannot be shaken by the misconduct of some of its disciples. And, even if the whole body of the English clergy abroad were infected with the dissipation, which turns so many of them from the right path, "the Church" would rest secure. Notwithstanding its self-confident torpidity, the innocent integrity of her who is its present head will protect it, like the angel, who hovered as a safeguard over the sleeping camp; while the wisdom of Parliament, in weeding out its corruptions, will give new life to all that is wholesome in its doctrines and practice. And nothing in that practice requires a more decided check, than the abuse of the privilege, which allows such swarms of beneficed clergymen to abandon their home duties, leaving

"the cure without the care,"

for the purpose of absenteeism, during the long and culpable indulgence which leads to so many scandals.

To record those various exhibitions of immorality, and what is, in a worldly sense, even worse than immorality, an indecent contempt of exposure, would be an invidious task, and would, perhaps, after all, be but an encouragement to that morbid longing for notoriety, which urges clerical as

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

well as lay offenders to violate decorum. But it is certain, that the disputes among British clergymen on the continent of Europe, during the last quarter of a century, would furnish matter for an appendix to Cobbett's History of the Reformation, — acute, searching, and most unfair as it was, — that would give almost as much pleasure, as the work itself, to the enemies of *l'Hérésie Anglicane*. One real good might result from such a compilation. By thus embodying in a general view the many isolated instances of scandal, a spirit of resistance might be aroused among the scattered congregations, who submit to, or at times become parties in, the misconduct of their pastors.

This last-mentioned evil is, after all, the main one. It is the mixing up of lay disputants with the quarrels of the divines, that casts so deep a slur on English character. Those persons, who have not travelled much out of England; who form their notions of clergymen from their own amiable and modest vicars and curates, and of clerical conduct from what is practised in the rural parishes at home; can form no adequate idea of the contrast presented by so many of the wanderers in other lands. But we can vouch, from close personal experience, that those instances of disgrace are, nevertheless, far more than overbalanced by abounding examples of respectability. But the misfortune, in cases of this nature is, that it is the exception which is always the most prominent. The man who forgets his cloth is always he, who is *en évidence* before the world. He brawls in the streets, and bullies in the vestry; turns the pulpit into a forum of dispute, and, by pamphlets and sermons, drags others into his quarrel. Instead of a minister of peace, he becomes a demon of discord. His track is too often to be traced in the deadly feuds and bloody encounters among those, whom he has succeeded in setting by the ears. While the ministers, who quietly perform their professional duties, and devote their leisure hours to the family or friendly circle, are unheard of beyond the towns they adorn by their virtues, and, overborne by the notoriety of some petty place, infested by such as those, whose misdoings we have faintly sketched.

The gangs of sporting characters, the "play men," the *levanters* from the race-course, or the *legs* from the clubs, who leave England in periodical flights, to settle for a sea-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

son in some Continental town, or cross the Channel on some particular pursuit of plunder, do not do half so much mischief to the national character, as the hypocrites who parade their sanctity, and by their conduct bring their profession into disgrace. The *chevalier d'industrie* is generally a man who pays his tradesmen's bills, rarely gets drunk, eschews local squabbles, and — sticks to his business; which is, to prey on the uncautious or unwary, or, in default of other victims, on his own kind, like fishes of the same tribe, who devour each other. A good appearance in the world is of great importance to this class of men; and it is very rarely that one hears of their flying from a town with their bills in arrear, or that, while they sojourn in it, they are mixed up in the quarrels of their countrymen. They herd together. They are not admitted, generally, into the upper circles; and the lower ones afford no temptation for their practices. They can scarcely be said to form a feature of English character. Come from what country they may, "play men" very nearly resemble each other in habits of life. We, therefore, exclude those *industriels* from our collection, as Plato, but for a different reason, excluded merchants from his republic; and, leaving the question of classes for some less wholesale inquiry than our own, we resume our desultory observations on English Continental society.

The difficulty of expressing one's self clearly in the language, which the very children of the new people we mix with talk *so* fluently, puts all foreigners in some degree out of temper, and it may be out of conceit, with themselves, on the threshold of the country they are about to penetrate. When a man is no longer at his ease, he is thrown off his guard. Awkwardness and *mauvaise honte* are the parents of many mischiefs. He, who is laughed at when he speaks, does not give his audience fair play when he thinks. An Englishman landing in France, in this dissatisfied mood, — and he particularly, from predisposing causes already pointed out, — is sure to take his revenge, by striving to despise the natives, to whom he appears ridiculous. Unable clearly to explain his wants, he finds out, or fancies, deficiencies in them. And thus his ignorance produces action and reaction, with discomfort to himself and injustice towards others.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It is under the influence of prejudice like this, that the Englishman, more than any other foreigner, hurries on his Continental tour; and, one evil generating another, the further and faster he goes the greater is his incapacity for fairly judging, and the less his chance of being fairly judged. It is quite wonderful how few Englishmen appear ridiculous at home, in comparison with the numbers who *are* so abroad. In the latter case, scarcely one in a score seems to be in his proper place. To use a common but expressive phrase, almost every one seems to have *a screw loose*. And so, in reality, it is. The want of regular and rational occupation, the perpetual effort to turn into new channels for employment, the incongruous pursuits, and the frequent failure attending them, set the whole machinery of the English *man* out of order. Instead of a screw, it may be fairly said, that all the screws, and wheels, and springs of the national character are in a state of dislocation. So that scarcely any individual, so situated, can be taken as a fair specimen of what his fellows, or himself, would be at home. And thus foreigners, who attempt to form an estimate of the English people from that portion of it which they habitually see, are, if we may be pardoned a poor pun, *as much abroad* as they are.

And no wonder that foreigners should be deceived and mystified, for there is really no more puzzling masquerade than the spectacle of thousands of human beings, who in their own country (whatever their faults of vulgar ambition) have been almost all fitly employed, undergoing all at once an unsuitable and unseemly change.

When we consider how many of the faults of England are carried abroad by those persons, it is strange to observe how few of its virtues they take with them. And, when these latter do in isolated instances appear, it is in such *travestie* as marks the assumption of historical characters by the motley maskers in a fancy ball. Thus is seen the industrious energy of English habits degraded into ignoble speculations, and a thousand shifts and expedients for making money by derogatory means. Many men, whose previous career had formed them for exertion, attempt its continuation in this new field; but miscalculation, of one kind or another, almost always carries failure in its train. Others, accustomed to the regular expenditure of a fixed income,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

finding, that, on the same plan, they are far richer abroad than at home, are lured into stock exchange transactions, seduced into private play or horse-racing, and become ruined from the sheer evil of having more money than they require for their accustomed wants.

But the absorbing mischief is, that absolute position of idle "gentility" in which every Briton of the smallest pecuniary independence finds himself, when settled on the Continent. No matter what he has been at home, — whether in commerce, wholesale or retail, a manufacturer, a farmer, an *employé*, — abroad he is a gentleman, by courtesy at least; and he finds abundant facilities for assuming the nominal attributes of this too common designation. Every Englishman or American, who does not absolutely carry on some traffic for the earning of his daily bread, on the Continent, is an Esquire by courtesy, and a gentleman by implication. Dropping into these dignities, by the mere accident of their location, as a squatter of the far West becomes a proprietor of the soil by the simple act of pitching his tent on it, it may be supposed, how awkward these Lords of the (chance) creation find themselves. It is much easier to assume a virtue, than to adopt a *tone*. The expenditure of a few hundred dollars, or the giving of a few dinners, may gain for the donor the reputation of generous hospitality. A judicious bully may make himself pass for brave. A woman constitutionally cold may palm herself off as chaste. But to play a first-rate part, without previous rehearsal; to *act* the gentleman, in short, is the most difficult effort of talent, either on the shifting stage of society, or on what is technically called "the boards." The numberless failures of the Continental company are, therefore, nothing wonderful. And lamentable exhibitions have we seen of the ridiculous, so lofty as almost to reach to the sublime; of meanness, so low as to leave no lower depth; in efforts to force a footing into those glittering coteries, where all is puff and paste, — like the *soufflés* of the *salle-à-manger*, or the *jewels* of the ballroom. But, forming a contrast to these vulgar aspirants, are to be found, if searched for, large numbers of retiring persons, who, with the advantages of "gentle blood," education, and real respectability, are satisfied with the enjoyment of some small and select circle; or, who, in default of that, keep aloof from society altogether.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

To live within one's income is almost considered as a cardinal virtue by the natives of the continent of Europe. Domestic economy may be possibly carried too far in France, Germany, and Italy, to square with English notions of fashionable enjoyment. But for real home happiness that system is assuredly the best, which makes show subservient to comfort, and which regulates the outlay of money by the gratification of personal tastes, rather than by the exigences of public opinion. The difference of feeling in this respect is exemplified by the fact, that "foreigners" never submit to a standard of general appearances, while, among the English abroad, few attempt to resist it. If, for instance, the happiness of "foreigners" depends on the possession of a carriage, or a box at the theatre, or a good table, or expensive dress, they indulge freely in that one particular enjoyment, to the exclusion of all others, in case they have not means sufficient to accomplish all. With the English, on the contrary, it is all or none. If they sport an equipage, they feel called upon to give dinners, balls, and routs. An opera box exacts a whole suite of expenditure. Every thing must be in what is called *keeping*. And this, be it observed, not for one's own comfort, or one's own liking, but for mere appearance' sake, and to escape the strictures of the Mrs. Grundys of the victim's particular world.

The consequence of this absurdity is, continual embarrassment and frequent disrepute. Many accessary errors add to these evils. The comparative cheapness of wine and other luxuries leads to a profuse expenditure, which more than meets the difference of house-keeping in England. Three dinners abroad for one at home, with a superabundance of champagne and claret, instead of port and sherry in moderation, soon leave the balance in the wrong side of the book; and the Amphitryon becomes too often a defaulter and a fugitive. The horses, carriages, and furniture come to the hammer; the reputation is broken up with the establishment; and all that remains is the empty fame of an undiscriminating hospitality, lavished on thankless partakers, and furnished at the expense of confiding creditors, with little personal cost but that of one's own character.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But many of the regular and bill-paying portion of the English abroad are at times conspicuous for bad taste, which is, in its effects, almost as injurious as bad conduct. A general arrogance of manner towards the natives of inferior degree goes far to render them unpopular. Tradespeople and servants are treated with an ungenerous disdain. The consequence is, that the English are worse supplied and worse attended than it is well possible to imagine. Their bearing towards the lower classes is, however, not less offensive, than a too frequent forwardness of demeanor in the higher circles. At the various Continental courts, it is a common reproach, that English people, without the least chance of being received at their own, thrust themselves forward, to the exclusion of the noblest and most honorable of the natives. If foreigners hate the English, it is not entirely for the mischief they have received at their hands. To have been beaten by them in war is not half so galling as to be insulted by them in peace. It is lamentable to the real cosmopolite, to see how few of the privileges of citizenship the English in general have acquired abroad, after five and twenty years of association.

And now, in looking back on what we have written, with a conscientious certainty, that, however severe it may appear, there is no exaggeration in it, we fear that it may lead to the conclusion, that we are unqualifiedly hostile to the English system of emigration to the continent, a system which the frequent and rapid intercourse with Europe is gradually causing to be adopted by inhabitants of the United States. We must, therefore, explain that such is far from our feeling. We think, on the contrary, that all the better purposes of civilization are eminently advanced by the free intercourse so long existing between the various countries of Europe. Nothing else could be so conducive to the expansion of the national mind of England, dammed up as it had been by so many previous years of war and isolation. But so great a good is not to be obtained without a high price; and that, in the present instance, is paid at the expense of a whole generation. The large masses of English, who have already taken the lead in exploring the unknown ways of Continental life, are like the early settlers in a new found district, who hew their path to information through desert depths, misled by false lights, and meeting

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

many mishaps, by carrying their own habits of thought and action into uncongenial regions. The parallel is not meant to go further. The comparison applies only to persons, not to places. Otherwise the figure should be reversed; for, certainly, the general tone of social life on the Continent, compared with that of England, or of the New World, is like a cultivated field contrasted with a half-cleared swamp.

It is true, that there are enjoyments to be found in England utterly unknown elsewhere. But, taking the whole social plan into view, every unprejudiced Englishman will allow its striking insufficiency for persons of moderate income and of middle station. It is on the Continent, that one must learn the art of making small means square with elegant desires. The opportunity for learning this lesson, and the certainty that its practice will be gradually introduced into the British isles, are enough to counterbalance many of the evils pointed out in this paper. But it is the children of the emigrants, who must reap the advantages of their expatriation. Very few indeed of the grown-up persons, who quit the long-indulged habits of English life for a residence abroad, are satisfied with or improved by the change. The perverseness of national prejudice will not allow them to profit by what is opened out to them. But the children, who are born on, or brought over early to, a foreign soil, acquire, by an instinct of adaptation, what no experience can teach. The accomplishments, ease, and independence of foreign manners are insensibly engrafted on the stem of English feelings. It is astonishing how young persons, so situated, seem intuitively to select the better parts of their own national character, and to blend them with those of the foreign people, with whom they are associated, but not confounded, from the cradle up. And when those persons, on their education being finished, are called on to return home, their example must inevitably tend to soften the character of their nation. A better understanding on the great questions of international intercourse, on the true principles of foreign policy, on social analogies or anomalies, will be the consequence. Intermarriages with foreigners will lead to more liberal ideas of national distinctions. A thousand kindly sources of feeling will be opened; and the wells of public opinion will be no longer poisoned by prejudice. All

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

these, and many concomitant blessings, may be looked forward to with certainty. Such advantages, however, are to be derived only at a distant day, from a state of things, the evils of which form at present an inevitable necessity.

ART. III. — *Introduction to the Literature of Europe in the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Centuries.* By HENRY HALLAM, F. R. A. S., Corresponding Member of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences in the French Institute. Paris: Baudry. 1839. 4 vols. 8vo.

SOME years have elapsed since the publication of this work, and, as it is now widely known and highly esteemed, it may seem that its character is sufficiently determined, and that any extended notice of it is unnecessary. In this country, however, its republication is of recent date, and the number of persons who have had opportunity to examine it is comparatively small. A work of such a character is not likely to attract immediate attention among a community of readers, who are deluged with reprints of the more ephemeral productions of the English press; and the few who are able to appreciate it, are more likely to wait for the chance of obtaining an English or French copy, than to read it in a coarse and clumsily executed American edition. But we will not complain of the demerits of the reprint, since to contribute in any way to the circulation of such a book is to render essential service to the cause of letters on this side of the Atlantic. Some account of its contents may be useful to this end, though the means are here wanting, which could be found only in well-stocked libraries, for a full examination of its statements and the general merits of its execution.

It is remarkable that, before the publication of this work, no English writer had attempted to give a general history of letters, or a particular account of the literature of his own country. No one was willing to undertake a task, for the due performance of which so many qualifications were required, and from which so much would naturally be expected. Accurate learning, much general information, a fair ac-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

quaintance with all the sciences, a perfect mastery of the languages of modern Europe, a discriminating taste, a sound judgment, and a pleasing style, are some of the essential requisites for success in such an enterprise, and therefore very few persons could engage in it without incurring the charge of undue presumption. Only the veterans in the literary field could grapple with such a gigantic undertaking, and, even with them, the issue would be very doubtful. They might rather diminish than increase the laurels, which they had earned in less ambitious efforts. More than two centuries ago Lord Bacon perceived the want of a history of letters, and marked out the plan on which it should be prepared; but the task became no whit less difficult, when that mighty intellect had displayed the importance of the work, and established the principles for its execution. One of his pregnant sentences forms the appropriate motto of the present history, for it describes in few words the general scheme, on which the writer has conducted his labors. We may spare criticism on the plan, which is recommended by such authority.

With the exception perhaps of Dr. Southey, no living English writer appears better qualified than Mr. Hallam for supplying the deficiency, that was pointed out by the great Advancer of learning. His previous writings, if they did not display that wide range of general scholarship, which is essential to success in a task like the present one, afforded good evidence, at least, that he undertook nothing without thorough preparation for it, and that any work from his pen would be elaborated with the utmost care. The "Constitutional History of England," and the "History of Europe during the Middle Ages," were generally admitted as standard works, from the very day of their publication. They were classed at once among "the books, which no gentleman's library should be without;" they became an essential part of the reading of every well-educated man. And the reputation which they have obtained is a just tribute to the judgment, learning, and discretion of the writer; for it is not founded on any captivating qualities of the subject, on any studied graces in the treatment of it, or on any subserviency to the passions and prejudices of the day. Mr. Hallam is a political writer without undue bias from the spirit of party and sect, a pleasing one without the affectation of rhetoric

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and eloquence, and a learned one without any unnecessary display of erudition. The subject which he has now treated is one of more general interest than those discussed in his previous publications; and, as the work was known to embody the labors of many years, it was received with curiosity and respect, and is likely to establish for him a wide and enduring reputation.

A leading characteristic of these volumes, as well as of those formerly published, is the grave and dignified impartiality of the writer. We do not allude merely to the absence of party spirit, any indications of which in a history of literature would be not only offensive, but absurd, though too many precedents for their admission into equally improper places might be found in contemporary publications. British writers have too frequently allowed the exciting and distorting influences of modern politics to blind the judgment of the critic and to warp the fidelity of the historian, even when the subjects discussed, or the facts narrated, were apparently removed to the safest distance from the appropriate arena for such disputes. The fouler exhibitions of this malignant spirit of politics have even soiled the pages of ancient history, and bespattered the notes to a Greek play. The parentage of anonymous publications on miscellaneous subjects may often be traced, so far, at least, as to determine whether the writer belongs to the school of the Quarterly, the Edinburgh, or the Westminster Review. As the cool and dispassionate temperament of Mr. Hallam preserved him from this error in a great degree, even when traversing the dangerous ground of English constitutional history, we might well expect, that his good sense would guard against it in the treatment of his present subject. But he is entitled to much higher praise for impartiality. His taste is singularly just and catholic. It is not warped by modern associations, nor blinded by national feeling. His estimate of French literature, for instance, is fair and liberal, forming quite a contrast to the judgments of many of his countrymen, who are very slow to recognise high merit on the other side of the channel. Voltaire's opinion of Shakspeare is but the counterpart in absurdity of many English criticisms on Corneille and Racine. Towards the latter, indeed, Mr. Hallam appears to us to err by excess of praise, prompted perhaps by a sense of the unjust award of former judges on the English bench.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We find it difficult to admit, that, in point of style, "he is second only to Virgil among all poets," or that his female characters "have the ideal grace and harmony of ancient sculpture, and bear somewhat of the same analogy to those of Shakspeare, which that art does to painting;" but we cordially echo the assertion, that "it is a very narrow criticism, which excludes either school from our admiration, which disparages Racine out of idolatry of Shakspeare." A critic would hardly subject himself to this reproach, by maintaining that the female characters of the French poet are too often insipid, and that his versification lacks spirit, and is too uniformly sweet and monotonous.

It is probably more difficult to be just towards the men of science, the metaphysicians, and the political writers of a former age and another church, than to criticize with fairness the elegant literature of a different language. Science advances with slow but sure steps, and it is as easy to detect the mistakes of a former century, as it is flattering to our own pride to expose them. The boundaries of philosophy, ethics, and theology, run into each other, and a Protestant writer may be pardoned for viewing with suspicion the casuistry of the Jesuits, while a countryman of Locke and Newton may very naturally triumph over the errors of Descartes. But our author's resolute impartiality avoids even the more secret and excusable causes of a biassed judgment. He is careful always to obtain the right point of view, — neither to view the past through the atmosphere of the present, nor to allow acknowledged excellences to be shadowed entirely by neighbouring faults. If his judgments are ever impugned, therefore, it must be for natural incorrectness of taste or a faulty discrimination, rather than for borrowed prejudices.

The literary criticism contained in these volumes is of great merit. It is neither commonplace nor affectedly profound. So much has been written upon the poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, that it was difficult to offer any thing further, which should bear even the semblance of novelty and truth. But Mr. Hallam's remarks, even here, have all the air of freshness, which naturally invests a virgin subject, and his disquisitions upon the great Italian poets, and even upon Shakspeare and Milton, are among the most ingenious and interesting portions of the work. This task had been an easy one, if his taste had allowed him to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

indulge in the misty speculations and fine-spun theories, which too often form the staple of German criticism. An endless thread of this sort may be spun by any one of an ingenious and fanciful turn of mind, but it will not sustain the lightest touch of scrutiny. Naturally averse to this dreamy kind of writing, Mr. Hallam's remarks bear a strong impress of good sense and correct taste, and are adapted rather to please and convince, than to bewilder or astonish the reader. It may not appear the highest praise to say, that the criticism is sound and judicious; but so much *æsthetical* cant, formed upon foreign models, is in vogue at the present day, that it is truly refreshing to find a subdued, temperate, and unambitious tone once more adopted in the school of taste. Paying the tribute of hearty admiration to his favorite authors, our historian is still not carried away so far by his enthusiasm, as to indulge in the rash and extravagant assertions, in which some writers labor to display their sensibility, but which lead one to doubt the sincerity of the very feeling which they are designed to prove. He ventures to point out faults even in Shakspeare, and in nearly every instance to qualify praise with some censure. His carefully regulated judgment appears as much in his notices of individuals, as of books. The Boswellian disease of inordinate admiration never fastens upon him, nor, on the other hand, does he ever appear ambitious of Johnson's favorite character of "a good hater." With such characteristics, it appears, that, if Mr. Hallam is not always a brilliant companion, he is at least a safe guide.

We have spoken of the variety and extent of the reading and general information, which are necessarily embodied in a work of this character. An examination of the volumes bears out the remark, and would seem to prove, that the preparation for them must have been the labor of a whole life. With great candor, the writer has allowed the whole of Bacon's remark to stand as the motto of his work, though it hints at the fact, which might, it is true, be naturally inferred under such circumstances, that, in so vast an undertaking, the whole of the information given, must not be viewed as the fruit of original research. Speaking of the number of books to be examined, for the purpose of a history of letters, Bacon remarks, that the end must be obtained, "*non eorum perlectione, (id enim infinitum quiddam esset,) sed*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

degustatione et observatione argumenti, styli, methodi, etc. In this way, (he continues, with his usual glowing imagery,) the literary spirit of a former age, as if by an incantation, may be evoked from the dead. If the limitation was necessary in his age, how much is the necessity increased by the almost endless multiplication of books in later times! Mr. Hallam mentions some subjects, such as mathematical science and anatomy, on which his observations are derived from secondary sources; and, when characters of books are inserted with a reliance upon other judges, without direct examination, the reader is usually warned of the fact. Such frankness marks the high-minded scholar, and inspires full confidence in his fidelity as a guide. After all these limitations, the work is a singular monument of literary industry, a vast storehouse, in which are garnered the rich accumulations of an active scholar's life. With Italian, French, English, and modern Latin literature, the author seems to be equally familiar. He is less acquainted with Spanish books, and his knowledge of German is evidently partial. The nature of the work imperatively required a full acquaintance with theology, speculative philosophy, ethics, political science, ancient literature, the drama, poetry, and belles-lettres, and on all of these the writer speaks with equal confidence. We could hardly expect more, even from the prodigies of German industry.

In executing such a work, there was evident danger of overlaying it with erudition, and presenting only the lifeless form of general literature, without any of its vivacity and grace. A writer intent only upon the display of his acquisitions would surely have fallen into this error, from which the refined taste and freshness of thought and language, displayed by Mr. Hallam, have effectually preserved him. The volumes abound with curious information, tasteful criticism, and elegant disquisition; and, considering also the miscellaneous nature of the contents, affording pleasant cates for every kind of appetite, we hardly know of a more readable book. If any portion is open to the charge of dullness, it is the rather diffuse analysis of some ponderous works on ethical and political science, for which the previous studies of Mr. Hallam may have created in him a liking, that many of his readers cannot be expected to share. He probably forgot the extent of such matter, when he wrote the remark in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the preface, that this should not be considered as a book of reference on particular topics, but as an entire and synoptical work. Most persons would rather refer occasionally to such copious abstracts, than read them continuously. One source of interest he has voluntarily resigned, by omitting entirely the biography of authors, and alluding but very seldom to any peculiar traits in their characters, or remarkable incidents in their lives. It is true, that much gleaning in so wide a field would swell the book beyond reasonable compass; but we incline to believe, that a somewhat larger portion of narrative than he has admitted, would throw light upon many of the topics discussed, and much facilitate the reader's progress. The lives and writings of literary men have such an intimate connexion, that in some cases, as in that of Descartes, for instance, we cannot gain a full knowledge of one, without some acquaintance with the other.

The practice of the French and Germans has been to introduce much general speculation into the history of letters. A full consideration of the general causes affecting the literary character of any age or country is blended with much ingenious theorizing on the possible results of a different combination of circumstances, and on the degree in which external influences may be resisted, or evaded. We cannot entertain much regard for such speculations. Though a proud title, that of "the philosophy of history," is claimed for them, they have been sadly abused in our times, and their utility, to say the least, is not very apparent. It is far more likely, that one's patience will fail in the perusal, than that the writer's fancy will be exhausted in the manufacture of such lucubrations. After an event has taken place, it is very easy to lay down general principles, in virtue of which it may be demonstrated, that it *must* have happened precisely in that way, and in no other. The only question is, whether such a connexion between cause and effect would have been discovered before the event happened. If so, it is a great misfortune, that the theorist was not born in the very age and country wherein his abilities as a prophet might have been manifested. M. Cousin has studied the philosophy of this subject so thoroughly, that he has even discovered a method of writing history *a priori*, founded on the original principles of the human mind, and the necessary connexion between ideas. He has demonstrated his theory

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in reference to the past, though we believe he has not yet written out his narration of every thing which is to happen, even to the end of time.

Mr. Hallam has cautiously avoided such fanciful speculations, so that it has even been objected to his work, that it is not so much a history of literature, as a *catalogue raisonné* of books and literary men. If he has erred at all, it is undoubtedly on the safe side, and we are sure that the real value of his work is enhanced by such a course, though it may not at once acquire so brilliant a reputation, as if written on a different model. We feel certain that the writer has gone honestly to work, — that the story is fairly and fully told, — without mutilation or coloring, in order to suit a preconceived theory. This assurance is worth all the elaborate fancies, that the most ingenious speculatist ever framed. To inspire perfect confidence is one of the highest results at which a writer, who aims at instruction, can hope to attain. There is little profit in receiving information, when one is obliged to doubt and question at every moment. Let the facts be honestly set forth, and the reader may speculate for himself. If the lesson be not an obvious one, it is probably not true. If it requires to be supported by nice deductions and fine-spun reasoning, arguments of equal tenuity will be able to overthrow it. The writer can claim a power of framing general conclusions superior to that of his reader, only on the ground, that he knows more than he has seen fit to communicate. If so, he is to blame for unnecessary secrecy. Let him keep back the inferences, and divulge the facts. Such was the plan, at least, on which the ancients wrote history, and their other writings show no inaptitude for contriving the most comprehensive theories.

We do not mean, that Mr. Hallam is wholly averse to general speculation. His work is something more than a mere dictionary of books and names. It bears the marks, throughout, of a comprehensive, acute, and thoughtful mind, that cannot watch the succession of facts without being struck with the connexion between them, though he usually puts only the clue to the maze of causes and effects into the reader's hands, and leaves him to trace out its remoter windings. Some of the general remarks, for instance, on the great events which took place in Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and their effects on the literary

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

spirit of the age, and on the circumstances which caused the rise and progress of certain schools of philosophy and letters, are ingenious and profound. But they are everywhere made subsidiary to the leading object of the work. Facts are not overlaid by theory, nor wrested into unnatural conformity with it. The history suggests general reflections, instead of furnishing them ready made. It is a vast repository of materials, on which the future speculatist may build.

But it is time to look more particularly into the contents of these volumes. The work commences with an introductory chapter on the general state of literature in the Middle Ages, up to the end of the fourteenth century. As the writer had treated this subject at length in a former work, a very brief sketch is here given, which, however, supplies many curious additional facts, that have been brought to light by recent researches. The history and antiquities of the Middle Ages have been studied of late with great zeal in Europe, the interest which attaches to the subject being partly a cause and partly a consequence of that great revolution of taste, which has brought the Romantic school in literature into such general favor. Fragments of the popular poetry of those times have been hunted up with great eagerness, and, though we cannot but believe, that its intrinsic merits in most cases have been even ludicrously exaggerated by the zeal of philologists and antiquaries, it is still very interesting, from the light which it throws on the origin and growth of the modern languages of Europe. Mr. Hallam has given a brief, but clear, summary of the results of recent inquiries respecting the formation of the Italian, Provençal, and French languages from the Latin, and of the English from the Anglo-Saxon, and has pointed out the sources of information for those who wish to pursue the subject. His account of the remarkable change in versification, from the metrical verse, marked by quantity, in use by the ancients, to the rhythmical poetry, measured by the accent or emphasis, adopted by the moderns, appeared novel to us, from the very high antiquity ascribed to the latter system. Traces of it, he observes, may be found in the second century, and even much earlier, long before the ancient arrangement by quantity had become obsolete. The two systems existed contemporaneously for a considerable period, the one among the instructed classes, and the other in the songs and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

popular poetry of the day, as its jingle was more pleasing to the ears of the vulgar. A necessary inference from this statement is, that "the distinction of long and short syllables, even while Latin remained a living tongue, was lost in speech, and required study to attain it." If this be so, it is strange that no more definite explanation has reached us, of the means by which the quantity of syllables was indicated in the pronunciation. The mode of reciting ancient verse is still a mystery; for no difference of emphasis, or tone, can make a syllable of many letters appear short, and it is extravagant to suppose, either that poetry could be read aloud only in a kind of chant, or that it could be distinguished from prose only by the eye. If the mode of pronouncing words agreeably to quantity was a part of the education of the higher classes, the common people being unacquainted with it, it is strange that we do not find some rules and directions concerning it laid down in the books. It should have formed an obvious topic of speculation and precept, and the total silence respecting it, observed even by the critical and rhetorical writers, is inexplicable. If the common people were ignorant of it in the second century, there is no reason to suppose, that they were better instructed in the days of Augustus; and Mr. Hallam seems to favor this conclusion. But is it credible, that, to the ears of the great body of the people, Virgil and Horace wrote nothing but prose?

Commencing with the fifteenth century, the plan of Mr. Hallam's work includes, in great part, the history of that great awakening of literary spirit in Europe, which is usually called "the Revival of Letters." With more propriety might it be denominated the revival of a taste for the Latin, and subsequently for the Greek, classics. The search after manuscripts, the elucidation of the text, and a painful imitation of the style of the ancient writers, formed almost the only employment of the learned. Science had few votaries, and the nascent literature of their own age and language was viewed rather as a relaxation, than as a broad and honorable field of exertion. Italy alone boasted of three great men, whose writings had purified and strengthened the vernacular tongue, and whose native prose and poetry furnished as bright models for study and imitation as the imperishable remains of Roman and Grecian genius. But these very writers were hardly aware of their own success.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

They threw carelessly aside the treasures which they had collected above ground, and continued to delve in the Latin mine. Boccaccio wrote Latin with more care and diligence than he did Italian, and Petrarch prized his poem of "Africa" more highly than his sonnets.

The men who first set the example of this passion for ancient literature, were undoubtedly persons of refined minds and a pure taste, though too many of their eminent successors appear to us, at least, only as laborious pedants. The former were weary of the subtile and vain disputes of scholastic philosophy and theological literature, and of the barbarous Latin in which they were carried on; and to their refined perceptions, the elegance, harmony, and correctness, the faultless purity, of ancient Roman poetry and eloquence came like the revelation of a new world of intellect. The classics occupied their whole minds, and they naturally disregarded the contemporaneous literature which was beginning to spring up around them, — the ballad epics of Germany and the poetry of the Troubadours, for instance, — in which strength was attended with rudeness and impurity, and a luxuriant fancy borrowed no grace or polish from art. Familiarity with Latin, and a competent knowledge of Greek, became the common badge of all the learned. By means of the former, scholars of different countries corresponded with each other, and a clannish and emulous feeling was kept alive among them, without the necessity of learning their respective vernacular languages, which they seem to have considered almost as barbarous dialects, fit only for the vulgar. It was a fortunate circumstance for the progress of learning, that the scholars dispersed through Europe possessed this substitute for a common language, without which, in that age, communication with each other had been difficult, and in many cases impossible. They were few in number, comparatively, and widely scattered among the nations; and without this means of intercourse many of them would doubtless have lived and died in perfect seclusion. Another advantage was, that each university was thrown open to pupils of all countries, and learned men of every clime could be invited to take a share in instruction. The practice of giving lectures, conducting correspondence, and writing books in Latin, has been long since abandoned; and the consequences have been very favorable to the diffusion

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of learning; but it may well be doubted, whether they have equally aided its progress. It were idle now to discuss the project of a universal language; for the age in which alone, if at all, it was practicable, has long since passed away. But the substitute for it, which was possessed for a long period by European scholars, exerted a greater influence, than is commonly attributed to it, in promoting the revival of a literary spirit, and aiding the progress of science throughout the civilized world.

In searching for the causes of the enthusiasm for antiquity, which manifested itself particularly in Italy in the beginning of the fifteenth century, Mr. Hallam attributes much to the pride, which the inhabitants of that country felt in their descent from the Romans; and he alludes to the story of Rienzi, as a proof of the ardor which might be kindled by ancient recollections. But it may be doubted, whether this feeling was strong and permanent enough to exert so much influence on the pursuits of the learned, and whether classical studies were not rather a cause, than a consequence, of the proud sense, which the Italians entertained of their high parentage. Besides, though the scholars of Italy led the way, the enthusiasm soon spread into other countries, and became as vivid and lasting there, though it was fostered by no national associations. A more natural explanation presents itself in the contrast, to which men of taste must have been keenly sensible, between the polished specimens of Roman genius, and the rude literature and other half-barbarous studies of that age. A perception of this contrast evidently animated the exertions of such persons as Petrarch and Poggio, and probably kindled equal zeal in many of their contemporaries. Born in this way, the devotion to classical studies was kept alive and strengthened by a less honorable feeling, — by the pride which scholars felt in an exclusive means of intercourse with each other, and in a pursuit so far removed from the taste and occupations of the common people. In every subsequent age, also, the pride of scholarship has centred particularly in these studies, an acquaintance with them being made to constitute, often very improperly, the only distinction between an educated and an uneducated man. No exclusiveness of this sort was ever maintained by the votaries of science. It was enough, that their pursuits were tolerated by the side of an employment, distinction in which formed the chief triumph of the learned.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The exaggerated estimate of ancient genius undoubtedly caused the neglect, with which the first blossoms of modern literature were received. Some of the most remarkable productions of the human mind, like Dante's great poem, attracted but little notice for many years after the death of their authors. Mr. Hallam says, that, for a hundred years, it was thought unworthy of a man of letters, even though a poet, to write in Italian. A more important effect of this classical zeal was manifested in erecting a standard of taste, and establishing principles of criticism, on which the literature of after times was formed. Greek and Roman associations reigned paramount for a long period in the schools of taste. An undue importance was attributed to method, polish, correctness, and purity, while vivacity, strength, and naturalness were held in lighter esteem. The effect of establishing such a standard of excellence was felt particularly in Italy and France, where the enthusiasm for antiquity, nursed by the pride of descent and consanguinity of language, was first felt and most widely diffused. It was less perceptible in England, where classical studies never flourished in an equal degree. The elaborate and artificial style of the Italian prose writers may be traced to this cause, which produced its most striking effects, however, in forming the pedantic taste and solemn stiffness, which characterize the literature of the age of Louis the Fourteenth. The separation between the Classical and Romantic schools of criticism, may be considered as beginning in the fifteenth or in the eighteenth century. In the former case, the taste of the educated classes was formed entirely on the ancient models, while the popular poetry was adapted of course to the feelings and associations of the multitude, to whom it was addressed. The two schools stood side by side, but not in opposition. But in later times, the relative importance of classical studies has sensibly diminished, even with the learned. The Middle Ages have assumed the dignity of antiquity in our eyes, and the poetry, which once formed the amusement of the populace, is now the object of the scholar's anxious research and careful study. The opposition between the two kinds of taste has become obvious and striking; it is waged with equal arms, and Romanticism, aided as it always is by the popular voice, threatens to push its old rival wholly off the throne.

Leaving this rather worn subject, we come to a few more

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

general remarks of our author on the prevailing trains of sentiment and opinion, which shaped the public mind at the close of the mediæval period. Our readers may like to possess Mr. Hallam's opinion on one of the most interesting topics which here come into notice, and we therefore extract the passage.

"The popular taste had been also essentially affected by changes in social intercourse, rendering it more studiously and punctiliously courteous, and especially by the homage due to women under the modern laws of gallantry. Love, with the ancient poets, is often tender, sometimes virtuous, but never accompanied by a sense of deference or inferiority. This elevation of the female sex through the voluntary submission of the stronger, though a remarkable fact in the philosophical history of Europe, has not, perhaps, been adequately developed. It did not originate, or at least very partially, in the Teutonic manners, from which it has sometimes been derived. The love-songs again, and romances of Arabia, where others have sought its birthplace, display, no doubt, a good deal of that rapturous adoration which distinguishes the language of later poetry, and have, perhaps, in some measure, been the models of the Provençal troubadours; yet this seems rather consonant to the hyperbolical character of Oriental works of imagination, than to a state of manners where the usual lot of women is seclusion, if not slavery. The late editor of Warton has thought it sufficient to call 'that reverence and adoration of the female sex which has descended to our own times, the offspring of the Christian dispensation.' But, until it can be shown that Christianity establishes any such principle, we must look a little farther down for its origin.

"Without rejecting, by any means, the influences of these collateral and preparatory circumstances, we might ascribe more direct efficacy to the favor shown towards women in succession to lands, through inheritance or dower, by the later Roman law, and by the customs of the northern nations; to the respect which the clergy paid them (a subject which might bear to be more fully expanded); but above all, to the gay idleness of the nobility, consuming the intervals of peace in festive enjoyments. In whatever country the charms of high-born beauty were first admitted to grace the banquet or give brilliancy to the tournament, — in whatever country the austere restraints of jealousy were most completely laid aside, — in whatever country the coarser, though often more virtuous, simplicity of unpolished ages was exchanged for winning and delicate artifices, — in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whatever country, through the influence of climate or polish, less boisterousness and intemperance prevailed, — it is there that we must expect to find the commencement of so great a revolution in society." — Vol. I. p. 101.

Most of the circumstances here assigned as causes seem rather to be manifestations of the very change of opinion, the origin of which is sought to be explained. The question is, why were the women admitted to inherit lands, or why did the clergy show them more respect, or the nobility esteem servitude to them as the highest distinction of a true knight? Mr. Hallam appears to underrate the influence of the only cause, which is sufficiently general and powerful to account for this striking alteration of sentiment. It is true, that the Christian doctrine does not directly prescribe respect and forbearance towards the weaker sex, but its indirect influences, especially in that form, — the Romish faith, — which was then almost universal in Europe, were highly favorable to the advancement of woman in society. The worship of the Virgin Mother necessarily redounded to the advantage of her sex. In hymning the praises of the blessed Mary, the priest and the devotee were led by an easy transition to the kindred excellences of female saints and martyrs, and then to the general qualities of the female character, which always affords the brightest patterns of unbounded faith, meekness, fortitude, and love. An imperfect understanding of the Gospel scheme could not wholly obscure the truth, that these gentler virtues, most unlike the strong and stern qualities of man's ruder nature, still occupied a much higher rank than the latter as Christian graces. In this way, without the force of direct commands, the silent influence of our religion constantly leads to a higher appreciation of the weaker sex. Woman has gained estimation, and even reverence, wherever the Gospel has been preached.

Besides, the natural constitution of the sexes, when its effects are not restrained or modified by positive institutions, makes the strong a suitor to the weak. The passion of love, when custom or law does not allow it the unnatural right of manifesting itself through harsh authority, or brute force, humbles man into a suppliant, and dignifies woman with the power to grant or refuse. Hence, to do away the prejudices, and the absurd institutions, derived from Paganism and Oriental manners, was to restore woman to the use

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of a natural advantage, by which Providence has balanced the superior strength of the other sex, and to give her an immediate superiority. In other words, when opinion establishes the rightful equality of the two, so that man is debarred the privilege of strength, woman at once becomes his superior, — his sovereign. He must bend at her footstool, and execute her behests. Now, Christianity teaches the natural equality of the whole race, and by doing away with Pagan institutions, and thus directly rescuing females from the condition of slaves, it indirectly raised them to a higher state. Men fell into natural subjection to them, and became proud of their chains. We trust that this solution of the problem, which we honestly believe to be the true one, is satisfactory to our fairer readers.

Mr. Hallam thinks, that a respectful deference to woman first began to appear as an element of European manners in the south of France, and near the close of the tenth century. It is very probable, that the condition of the sex was sensibly ameliorated at a much earlier date, though it is impossible to affirm this with certainty, as we possess so few indications of the state of manners and domestic life in those ages. Very naturally, the imperfect civilization of the times, with the constant wars and intestine commotions which accompanied and followed the fall of the Roman Empire, greatly retarded the change, which the spread of the Christian religion was slowly bringing about. Real gallantry at last appeared among the people, who have ever since boasted of it as a peculiar trait of their national manners, and at a time when various circumstances were preparing the way for an outburst of religious enthusiasm. Somewhat later, poetry and romance, by inculcating a deeper vein of sentiment, and lending more varied, fanciful, and exaggerated expressions to passion, powerfully contributed to the progress of female ascendency.

Chivalry and some kindred subjects are here briefly considered by our author, but though the topics are tempting, we must pass on to the graver portions of the work. The history is divided in chronological order, with a minuteness and strict adherence to the plan, which are rather perplexing, from the frequent change of subject and the scattered position of the materials. Thus the introductory chapter is followed by a general account of European literature from 1400 to 1440, and then the circumstances of most

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

importance in literary history, and the books published, are ranged into decennial periods, and considered in this fragmentary way up to the end of the century. After 1500, another division, into subjects, is added to the chronological arrangement, and philology, science, philosophy, theology, poetry, the literature of taste, &c., are separately treated, usually by half centuries, up to the end of the work. Hence, when an author wrote on several subjects, and published at different periods, one is obliged to look at half a dozen places in the several volumes, in order to gather a full account of his writings. Lord Bacon's "Essays" are considered in one division, his larger philosophical works in another, and his "History of Henry the Seventh" in a third. Some of Shakspeare's plays fall into the latter half of the sixteenth century, and the remainder into the first half of the seventeenth; in a third place, we find a notice of his Sonnets, and in a fourth one of the two longer poems, — these being separated from the plays by the division of subjects. Mr. Hallam's general scheme of distribution is a good one, and, as we have said, it has the weight of Lord Bacon's authority; but it seems to be too rigidly followed out. It were better to treat of one author in full, in that half century in which his principal works were published, and under that subject to which he chiefly devoted himself.

The brilliant period of Lorenzo de' Medici, when Florence became for a time the Athens of the civilized world, is sketched by Mr. Hallam with the brevity, which his limits required, but with a glow of language, that marks the natural attractions of the subject. The names of Politian, Ficinus, and John Picus of Mirandola are enough to cause one to pardon much to the political faults of the prince who patronized them, and of the city which gave them a home. They were men who enriched genius with learning, and if they allowed the one to pass out in extravagance, they prevented the other from degenerating into slavishness and pedantry. If the Platonic enthusiasm of the two latter displayed itself with too little regard to the limitations of reason and good sense, much excuse for them may be found in the circumstances, which first kindled their ardent feelings and gave too wide a range to their speculations. The study of Greek, a taste for which followed so soon upon the revival of Latin literature, enabled them to pass from the elegant but meagre

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

disquisitions of Cicero, to the eloquent and suggestive dreams of the Platonic philosophy. Their own minds were bold and inventive, and they found ample nutriment for speculation in the dogmas of their own church, and the mingled philosophy and theology of the Grecian sage. They were shielded from the charge of heresy by the recondite nature of their studies, and the lofty flight and mystical expression of their doctrines. Their taste first led them to the study of Plato, whose full-robed and gorgeous speculations in their eyes far outshone the dry technicalities and verbal subtilties, to which the philosophy of Aristotle had been reduced. Afterwards, the license of speculating on such lofty themes began to be fascinating in itself, apart from external decorations, and they learned to mingle the still more fanciful doctrines of the later Platonists, — the Alexandrian school, — with the original teachings of the master. The casual coincidence of these dogmas with some parts of the Christian scheme has often contributed to their popularity, and made them an object of study with those whose minds were naturally inclined to religious mysticism. This partial agreement was sufficient to shield the system that Ficinus published, from the attacks of a bigoted and ignorant priesthood; but his friend and pupil, Picus of Mirandola, whose ardent temperament and thirst for knowledge had involved him in the mysteries of Oriental philosophy and the Jewish Cabala, was not so fortunate. The nine hundred theses on all subjects, metaphysical, theological, magical, and cabalistical, which he published at Rome, and offered to defend against all comers, roused the suspicion of churchmen, who could not understand them. A great clamor was raised, and he was obliged to retract and explain to a considerable extent, before the Pope pronounced him free from censure.

Mr. Hallam remarks, that the whole Platonic theology of Ficinus "appears a beautiful, but too visionary and hypothetical system of theism, the ground-works of which lay deep in the meditations of ancient Oriental sages." It belongs to a class of speculations, which have exercised more or less the aspiring and fanciful minds of every age. The eager curiosity of men respecting the nature and origin of the human soul, its connexion with the Deity, and the possibility of a chain of intermediate intelligences, has caused the formation of a great number of systems, imposing from the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

grandeur of the subject considered, captivating from the gorgeous dress in which the doctrines are usually conveyed, but heating and unsatisfactory in their effects, and having no support either in reason or revelation. Indulgence in such fancies seems to incapacitate the mind for calm judgment and sound reasoning, and for any application of the common laws of scientific inquiry. In reading the exposition of them, one is at a loss to know whether the writer puts them forth as serious doctrines, which are to be examined and admitted, or rejected, on the strength of the reasons advanced, or as mere poetical dreams, which may please the intellect for a time, in the same manner that the taste and fancy are gratified by fiction and romance. Revelation affords no materials for them, and seems even to discountenance their formation. The teachings of Christianity are exclusively practical in their aim, though, to a certain extent, speculative truths, great facts, are made known, as a basis, or sanction, for the moral precept. Mere curiosity is never indulged, for the object of religion is not knowing, but doing. The immortality of the soul, and the being and attributes of a God, are revealed as furnishing objects for pious meditation, and incentives to virtuous conduct; but no information is vouchsafed respecting the mode of a future life, the manner of spiritual existence, or the relation which the enfranchised spirit will bear to the Deity. The ambitious mind may speculate upon these questions, but it will speculate in vain. The entire want of success in the inquiry is apparent at once to the cool observer, though it is hidden from the wild imagination and excited brain of him who is engaged in the profitless pursuit. Gleams of the invisible world seem to open upon his straining eyes. Things around him appear to lose their reality. The words of Scripture no longer convey a plain precept, or narrate a simple fact; they are invested with a hidden meaning, and darkly indicate the secrets of a higher state of being. An ambitious and erratic philosophy thus passes over into an insane illuminatism, and he, who began as a scientific inquirer, ends with bringing forward the absurd pretensions of a miracle-worker and a prophet. Spiritual impostures have germinated alike in the cell of the fanatic, and in the closet of the over ardent and daring seeker after speculative truth.

Picus of Mirandola is one of the most remarkable in-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stances of a great mind, unhappily perverted by such delusions. As a prodigy of early attainments, no parallel can be found for him, except in the half fabulous story of the Admirable Crichton. He came to Florence when he was but twenty-two years old, having at that early age exhausted all the metaphysics and theology that were taught in the schools, acquired a knowledge of Hebrew and other Eastern languages, and made for himself a name among scholars and men of taste by the graces of his Latin composition and Italian poetry. He had come to loathe the philosophy then commonly taught in the schools, and, under the instruction of Ficinus, studying more closely the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle, he became convinced, that they were but different expositions of the same system, and were both derived in the main from the books of Moses, which appeared to him to be the common storehouse of all science and art. This notion inspired him with new zeal for the study of the Oriental languages, and especially of the Cabalistic books, whence he derived the greater part of his celebrated theses. Though many of these books, which he had sought out with great pains, were but modern forgeries, he believed that they contained a true revelation, and furnished the only means for demonstrating the divine mission of the Saviour, and explaining the mysteries of Christianity. His great plan, which he did not live to finish, was but an expansion of that of the later Platonists, being intended to reconcile all differences of doctrine, and to unite all theories in one grand eclectic system. He died at the early age of thirty-two, leaving a wide reputation as a prodigy of youthful talent and learning, and a warning example against those pursuits, on which he had expended his marvellous industry and genius, without profit either to himself, or to his fellow-man.

The Platonic Academy at Florence, which engrossed so much of the favor of Lorenzo de' Medici, and of which Ficinus and Picus were the distinguished ornaments, hardly survived their deaths; but the disposition which it had created for wild and fanciful speculations in theology and philosophy, continued to be perceptible in the schools for nearly a century. The mystics and theosophists henceforward occupy a prominent place in the history of philosophy, till the labors of Bacon and Descartes exposed the fruitlessness and vanity of their theories, and established the method and principles

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of philosophizing for modern times. The history of this speculative movement in the fifteenth and a part of the sixteenth century is curious, as it shows the first effect of the new-born zeal for letters, and the increased study of the languages, on the philosophical tendencies of the age. The knowledge of Greek and Hebrew disinterred many old opinions and theories, which now appeared with all the freshness of recent inquiries, and enriched what had seemed hitherto as an exhausted ground of speculation. On the first opening of a new store of systems, the points of similarity, which they exhibit with each other, and with theories previously known, naturally come first into notice, and the primary effect is to encourage the introduction of Eclecticism into philosophy. In this way, the Alexandrian school arose, forming a connecting link between the ancient systems of the Greeks, and the theology of later times, and of other countries. The comprehensive view of other theories, which forms the groundwork of an Eclectic philosophy, encourages lofty expectations of the ultimate ends to be obtained; and the forced and allegorical interpretations, which are rendered necessary by the attempt to reconcile conflicting doctrines, lead to a mystical form of thought and language. Enthusiasm and mysticism are the twin children of an Eclectic spirit in the schools of speculation. The Platonic Academy at Florence commenced a movement, which was at once a revival and a continuation of the efforts of the later Platonists, and which would have produced equally great results, if the rapidly increased learning and intelligence of the age had not earlier checked its progress. Maturer study and reflection bring out the points of contrast and the antagonist principles of different theories, and expose the futility of any attempt to melt them into one. The invention of the art of printing, and the reformation in the church, with the consequent enlarged freedom of thought and inquiry, were destined to produce better fruits in philosophy, than the mere revival and conglomeration of old errors. Descartes showed, that the whole work must be commenced anew, on a different foundation, and with fresh materials; and Bacon established the method and the principles, on which the new structure was to be reared.

The character and labors of the most eminent men of letters during the first century and a half after the invention of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the art of printing appear in strong contrast, in some respects, with those of a similar class in our own age. In comparing them together, we are at first struck with what appears to be the superior industry of the former, and their greater devotedness to the cause. The men of this generation seem like dwarfs, following in the footsteps of giants. Scholars then worked without any of the rich means and appliances of study, which now enable a schoolboy to accomplish in a month, what then required the toil of years. Grammars and dictionaries were either to be prepared for the first time, or could be found only in a rude and imperfect state. Separate and full treatises on collateral subjects did not assist the student with a rich store of subsidiary information. But modern scholarship, with its ample apparatus, and all its accuracy and refinement, looks puny and trivial, when one contemplates the gigantic monuments of toil, that were left behind them by such men as Budæus, Scaliger, Turnebus, and Stephens. Weighing the two classes of scholars together, seems to be like an attempt to balance the ponderous folios, which inclose the learning of those times, against the light and elegant duodecimo volumes, with large-print text and a generous breadth of margin, which gratify the luxurious tastes of our contemporaries. Both in London and Paris, a little army of commentators and other laborers were recently employed on a new edition of Henry Stephens's Thesaurus, one of the earliest Greek lexicons, as it certainly is one of the largest. The original work was perfected by one man, and was by no means the only, or even the chief, labor of his life, while the modern edition employed so many hands, and was several years in progress. A fanciful writer might compare the modern editors to a swarm of insects, hovering over the carcass of a lion. It may be noticed also, that competent judges do not find the new edition so far superior to the original in fullness and accuracy, as might be expected from the great facilities for rendering it a perfect work.

The division of labor, and the distraction of different employments, are undoubtedly the cause of this apparent inferiority of modern days. The scholars of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries cultivated the ground well, because they worked only a small field. They were well acquainted with the Latin and Greek classics, because they had no occasion

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to study any thing else. Science was hardly created, at least in the extended modern signification of the term. How many branches of it exist now, and how comprehensive and varied, a general knowledge of which is essential to every well-educated person, though he may choose to concentrate his own efforts, in the main, on a single department of letters, or one object of research. The accumulated productions of the human mind during three active centuries lie around the scholar in endless profusion, and, as it is ever more easy and delightful to receive than to create, it needs no little self-denial to turn away from such a banquet, and devote one's labors to a single and narrow task. Besides, in a former age, the work was to be commenced from the very foundation, and every inch of an individual's progress carried forward the limits of general knowledge for the whole race. Now, it requires much time and toil to reach the starting-point of fresh inquiry, and many are employed on a secondary task, — in working over again, putting into new shapes, and reducing to a shorter compass, the stores of learning inherited from former centuries. There is as much activity of mind as ever, but the fruits of it do not all appear on the surface. But it must be conceded, that the labor of working up to the present boundaries of knowledge does not favor the disposition or the capacity to extend those limits. A new science, a new object of study or effort, is prosecuted with much greater zeal and success in the earlier years of its history, than after it has made considerable progress, and is established as a regular department of education.

The published correspondence of such men as Erasmus, Scaliger, and their learned contemporaries, shows the singular acerbity with which their literary controversies and personal disputes were managed. The whole vocabulary of abuse is applied with a vigor and earnestness, from which even the editors of political newspapers in modern times might derive a lesson. Judging from the specimens that we have of their letters, and other controversial writings, it does not appear, that the "still air of delightful studies" was favorable to gentleness of disposition or patience under wrong. Perhaps it may be laid down as a general truth, that men who are more conversant with books than with society, who are more accustomed to use language on paper than in conversation, do not weigh the force of harsh terms, or observe

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the proprieties of dispute with that caution, which characterizes the speech of persons, who mingle much with the world. It requires more effrontery to speak with freedom, than to write with it; and reproachful language committed to paper is dwelt upon and studied, till it rouses all the angry passions of him to whom it is addressed. When the matter in dispute borders upon theological ground, the violence with which it is urged is naturally increased, and this circumstance explains much of the haste and warmth, with which the controversies, that we are now speaking of, were conducted. Nearly all the actors in them were excited by the strife in words that accompanied the Reformation, and it is well known with how much heat this great religious quarrel was carried on. Many of Luther's publications are summarily characterized by Mr. Hallam as "bellowing in bad Latin."

The remarks of our author on the Reformation and its effects are very brief, but they are well considered, and display very favorably his cool and impartial judgment. The theme lay in his path, for the influence of this great religious movement is very apparent in the history of letters in general, to say nothing of the store of publications which it directly occasioned. We extract a paragraph, that contains an ingenious and striking comparison.

"We cannot give any attention to the story of the Reformation, without being struck by the extraordinary analogy it bears to that of the last fifty years. He who would study the spirit of this mighty age may see it reflected as in a mirror from the days of Luther and Erasmus. Man, who, speaking of him collectively, has never reasoned for himself, is the puppet of impulses and prejudices, be they for good or for evil. These are, in the usual course of things, traditional notions and sentiments, strengthened by repetition, and running into habitual trains of thought. Nothing is more difficult, in general, than to make a nation perceive any thing as true, or seek its own interest in any manner, but as its forefathers have opined or acted. Change in these respects has been, even in Europe, where there is most of flexibility, very gradual; the work, not of argument or instruction, but of exterior circumstances slowly operating through a long lapse of time. There have been, however, some remarkable exceptions to this law of uniformity, or, if I may use the term, of *secular variation*. The introduction of Christianity seems to have produced a very rapid subversion of ancient prejudices, a very conspicuous alternation of the whole channel

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

through which moral sentiments flow, in nations that have at once received it. This has also not unfrequently happened through the influence of Mohammedism in the East. Next to these great revolutions in extent and degree, stand the two periods we have begun by comparing; that of the Reformation in the sixteenth century, and that of political innovation wherein we have long lived. In each, the characteristic features are a contempt for antiquity, a shifting of prejudices, an inward sense of self-esteem leading to an assertion of private judgment in the most uninformed, a sanguine confidence in the amelioration of human affairs, a fixing of the heart on great ends, with a comparative disregard of all things intermediate. In each there has been so much of alloy in the motives, and, still more, so much of danger and suffering in the means, that the cautious and moderate have shrunk back and sometimes retraced their own steps, rather than encounter evils which at a distance they had not seen in their full magnitude. Hence we may pronounce with certainty what Luther, Hutten, Carlostadt, what again More, Erasmus, Melancthon, Oriander, would have been in the nineteenth century, and what our own contemporaries would have been in their times. But we are too apt to judge others, not as the individualities of personal character and the varying aspects of circumstances rendered them, and would have rendered us, but according to our opinion of the consequences, which, even if estimated by us rightly, were such as they could not determinately have foreseen." — pp. 283, 284.

Among the more valuable portions of Mr. Hallam's work are the clear and full notices of the philosophical writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The summary given in each instance is necessarily brief, but it is distinct and precise, so far as it goes. The historian is content to act in his only proper office, which from the nature of the case is a secondary one, — to develope the views or the system of another, without interlarding it too much with his own opinions, or forcing it into a preconceived scheme of philosophy. He never uses the theory of another only as a pretext for expounding his own. Frequently he confines himself to the humble task of making an analysis or abstract of a particular treatise, and allowing the reader to form his own conclusions respecting its truth and value. The influence of a system is estimated from effects actually produced, from known facts in the subsequent history of speculation, and not from a dogmatical view of the necessary consequences of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

certain opinions. In the amount and clearness of the information afforded, Mr. Hallam's work is far superior to Dugald Stewart's agreeable but sketchy "Dissertation on the Progress of Metaphysical, Ethical, and Political Philosophy." It does not contain so many pleasing disquisitions, nor is it written with such copiousness and elegance of style. But the parts are more justly proportioned and coherent with each other, and the history is more definite and complete in itself. Stewart too often takes for granted the reader's general acquaintance with the subject, and therefore considers it only in fragments, or under certain aspects. He touches here and there upon the main topic, but does not consider it methodically and at length. His dissertation affords some very pleasant reading, but is unsatisfactory as a whole, and is almost useless as a work of general reference. Mr. Hallam's book is less ambitious in its aim, but it is more complete and instructive.

The account of Lord Bacon's writings, and of the chief characteristics of his philosophy, is carefully labored, and fully sustains the justness of the preceding remarks. The topic was a perplexing one to manage, not that it is difficult to offer something new respecting it, for though trite it is not exhausted; but because so many clashing opinions and superficial views are entertained respecting the nature and the value of the Baconian philosophy. Few subjects are so much talked about and so imperfectly studied. It is no trifling task to master its details and become thoroughly acquainted with its spirit and general bearing, though fragments may be gathered, and crude and imperfect notions imbibed, in every quarter. It is important to recollect, that we possess only a part of the system, which was laid out with such wonderful breadth and method in the *Instauratio Magna*, but which the author did not live to finish. It may be questioned, whether he ever expected to finish it himself, even if he had hoped for a longer life and greater leisure, than he was destined to enjoy. His scheme covered the whole ground, reaching up not only to the actual, but to the possible limits of human knowledge, and, notwithstanding the great progress of science since his day, we are still far from realizing his magnificent anticipations. Laboring at once on several portions of the grand plan, endeavouring not only to establish the theory, but to exemplify it by his own discoveries, and frequently interrupted

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in his studies by the active business of life, it is not strange, that some difficulty should be found in piecing together the parts of his unfinished work, and ascertaining the whole reach and aim of his philosophy. It is easy to gain a general but vague idea of his system, to show the direction in which it leads, and to comment on a few of the pregnant and instructive maxims, which are found in its details. But it does not admit of being summed up in a single aphorism. It probably did not dawn upon Bacon himself as one idea, capable, indeed, of numberless applications, and leading a thousand ways, but all referrible to a single point. Those who speak of induction and experiment as his sole method, of physical science as the only field, and of practical utility as the solitary aim of his speculations, have but a very imperfect idea of the Baconian philosophy.

The great merit of Bacon does not consist in his overthrow of the philosophy of the schools, any more than that of Socrates depends on the refutation of the Sophists. Both these great minds were more skilful to create than to destroy, and their fame rests on their success in animating and directing the efforts of their followers and successors, and on the consequent positive accession of human knowledge and happiness. Even in Bacon's time, the authority of the Aristotelian philosophy had visibly declined. Within the moss-covered walls of the universities, indeed, its adherents still maintained their ground ; but the barrenness of the system was perceived, and it continued to be taught only because nothing but mystical speculations or arbitrary hypotheses were offered in its place. The subtilties and vain refinements of the scholastic logic and philosophy were still exercised in the theological field, but science gained nothing in this warfare of words, and the futility of the dispute was generally manifest. The *Instauratio Magna* begins with remarks on the decayed condition of philosophy and natural science, as an admitted fact. "The very authors," — we paraphrase rather than translate the words of Bacon,— "the very authors who have arrogated to themselves a dictatorship in the sciences, and decide with so much confidence on all subjects, when they come to themselves after a short interval, begin to complain of the subtilty of Nature, the dark recesses in which truth is hidden, the obscurity of all things, the intertexture and complexity of causes, and the weakness

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of human intellect; appearing none the more modest for this, — that they chose to refer their failure to the common unlucky fate of men and things, rather than confess their individual weakness." The wisdom which we have inherited from the Greeks, he continues, has become a kind of scientific play, and is proper only for boys. It is fertile in controversies, but barren of fruit.

A particular examination of the state of the sciences at this period, would cast another shade over this gloomy picture. Astrology, alchemy, and natural magic were still favorite objects of inquiry and research. There were glimmerings of dawn in the science of the heavens, but the true theory was not yet separated from the false. It was one guess among many. The sailor steered his vessel by the compass and the pole-star, and not by regular observations of the heavenly bodies. Still he went boldly on his course, and geography as a science had made rapid strides. Everywhere but within the scholastic institutions men were weary of the prevalent systems of philosophy, and wished for a better, but knew not whither to turn. With such aids and lights on his path, Bacon commenced his task of legislating for science, — of governing a kingdom that existed as yet only in the far-reaching sagacity of his own mind. The task seemed much like that of Plato, establishing laws for his ideal republic, or of Sir Thomas More, directing the affairs of Utopia. But how different the result! To illustrate his precepts by a running commentary of examples, we must have recourse to the most brilliant discoveries of modern times, — to the Optics of Newton, the experiments of Lavoisier on the gases, those of Davy on the alkalies, of Watt on Steam, and of Franklin on electricity. The younger Herschel, in his excellent "Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy," has recently completed a survey of modern science, and of the methods by which, enlightened by past experience, inquirers are now conducting their researches; and his work, though not an intentional, is still the most instructive commentary on the *Novum Organon*. If the historical survey were extended a little farther, if one should examine the failures of scientific effort, the false theories and exploded hypotheses, of the last two centuries, and thus ascertain the causes of error, he would complete the illustration of another branch of the Baconian philosophy.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It is this forecast of mind, this comprehensive and clear view of science, not as it was, but in the state which it was destined to attain, that gives the most vivid idea of the commanding genius of Bacon. He did not deduce rules from practice, as the Greek critics founded a theory of Epic poetry on the examples of Homer in the Iliad and the Odyssey. The history of the past displayed a warning, but offered no guidance, and he looked to the future only for a satisfactory trial of his method. He aimed to effect a complete survey of the field of human knowledge, and by comparing the work to be done with man's capacity for investigation, to determine what efforts were to be prosecuted, and what relinquished from the impracticability of the end proposed. To adopt his own illustration, he wished no longer to wander darkling on the plain, but to mount the watchtower of a higher science, — *speculam altioris scientiæ*, — whence the whole field could be seen in one view, and the bearings and relations of all its parts be clearly defined. He had full confidence in the future, and the gloomy lessons of experience could not shake his trust. "As for the possibility," he observes, "they are ill discoverers, who think there is no land, when they can see nothing but sea." From his elevated position, not only did his eye catch the first beams of the rising sun, long before it was visible from the plain below, but he beheld the vast region on which it shone. Its high mountains, and pleasant valleys, and broad fields, rich with the promise of harvest, were all extended before him, and he viewed the country and mapped it out for the benefit of coming generations, who were to enter in and take possession. It seems, therefore, that Cowley, in his quaint fashion, has aptly enough expressed the nature of the service, which the great Improver of Learning rendered to his fellowmen.

> "Bacon, like Moses, led us forth at last;
> The barren wilderness he passed,
> Did on the very border stand
> Of the blest promised land;
> And, from the mountain-top of his exalted wit,
> Saw it himself, and showed us it."

One quality, which has added to the popularity and consequently to the influence of Bacon's writings, is the impressive character of his style. His imagination was often misled by the false taste of the age, but its power and grandeur

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

could not be entirely perverted or hidden. It sometimes flashes with the greatest brilliancy, when the subject appears to afford the least scope for its appearance, and it is always at hand to minister to his intellect, or to lend force and authority to his teachings. His philosophy is constantly enveloped in the most splendid imagery, which hangs round it like the drapery round the limbs of an ancient statue, only giving higher ideas of the strength and symmetry of the form, which it partially conceals. His wit often degenerates into conceit, and his fancy is discursive and lawless; but these qualities lend vivacity and point to the aphorisms, in which his most striking thoughts are conveyed, and give them a stronger hold on the attention and memory of the reader. On the whole, the style of Bacon is unique, and it certainly cannot be recommended as a model for philosophical writings; but it gives a vivid idea of the strength and comprehensiveness of his genius, and it has aided and widened the influence of his speculations. Mr. Hallam appears to be little sensible of its power, for his remarks upon it are confined to a censure of the strange and rather fantastic nomenclature, which Bacon attempted to introduce into science. We may admit the awkwardness of the terms thus invented, without losing our admiration of the general qualities of the master's style.

We have said, that it is impossible to sum up the Baconian philosophy in a single proposition. No one word offers the key-note of the whole system. No single theory is presented with a show of sweeping generalization, aided by which we can resolve the errors of former inquirers, and be guided in future by a safe path to a certain result. Mr. Hallam justly observes, that Bacon obtained "a triumph over arrogant usurpation without seeking to substitute another; and he may be compared with those liberators of nations, who have given them laws by which they might govern themselves, and retained no homage but their gratitude." In consequence, his name is not specially connected with any one speculation or method, and his philosophy cannot be brought at once to any simple and decisive test. It must be studied as a whole, in the same comprehensive spirit in which it was conceived. Its theme is as broad as the whole field of human knowledge, and its parts are elaborated with equal care, without being forced into unnatural connexion, or arbitrarily included under a single principle. Every one knows

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that induction, as a method of study, is at least as old as Aristotle. But Bacon first perceived its full importance as a means of scientific inquiry, analyzed it, and determined the proper rules of its application. We are familiar enough with the modes of its present use; but how many instances can be found of its successful application as an implement of science in the ages before the time of Galileo and Bacon? It was easy to hit upon, for it was in common use by the vulgar, after a rude fashion, in their ordinary concerns. But it was not in favor with philosophers and men of science. They were ambitious of a higher *organon* of investigation. Fanciful hypotheses, hasty anticipations of the truth, long-drawn deductions from principles arbitrarily assumed, endless commentaries and explanations of the writings of men, who were supposed to have mastered all science only because they lived nearer to the infancy of the human race, — every thing, in short, but patient observation and methodical study, was used as a means of increasing the stores of human knowledge. Bacon showed the way to success by reversing their methods, and teaching humility as the first lesson. He was humble in the choice of means, for he recommended beginning with particulars, and rising by degrees to general propositions, — a course which had hitherto been viewed with contempt. But he inculcated self-dependence, by repudiating the authorities which had long reigned paramount in the schools. He did not wholly reject the Aristotelian logic, but he limited its use to verbal disputes, and proved that it was inapplicable to discovery and invention. He claimed no superiority for physics over speculative science, but he divided their respective territories by a broad line of distinction, and restricted each to the employment of its own proper means of investigation. He discouraged mere speculation in natural science, because it was fruitless; but he also showed the absurdity of merely accumulating particular facts without any principle of order or selection, as from such no useful inference could be drawn. This distinction is best illustrated by himself, though we are again obliged to paraphrase rather than translate the quotation. "Those who have hitherto treated the sciences, have been either empyrics or dogmatists. The empyrics, like ants, only heap up their stores, and use them for food. The speculatists, like spiders, spin their webs out of themselves.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The middle course is that of the bee, which gathers materials from the flowers of the garden and the field, but works them over and digests them by its own faculties. Not unlike this process is the true business of philosophy, which does not depend either wholly or chiefly on the original power of mind, nor yet does it gather materials from natural history and mechanical experiments to be stored away entire in the memory, but to be refashioned and digested by the intellect." *

The philosophy of Bacon is not exclusively utilitarian in its aim or tendency. He did not restrict the ends or uses of science to the physical well-being of mankind. But he rebuked the arrogance and vanity of the Stoical school, who confined themselves to frothy declamations concerning virtue and the true nature of happiness, and neglected the real improvement of the race. It is undoubtedly true, that the inductive method properly so called, as explained in the *Novum Organon*, has a primary reference to physical science, and, through that, to the increase of human power, and the multiplication of bodily comforts. How highly Bacon estimated such results is apparent from the way in which he speaks of the three great inventions of modern times, — the art of printing, gunpowder, and the mariner's compass. These three, he observes, have changed the appearance and condition of things over the whole earth, — the first in literature, the second in war, the third in navigation. Innumerable changes have followed these inventions, — "so that no empire, no sect, no star seems to have exercised so great power and influence over human affairs, as these mechanical contrivances." † But the inductive method is but one part of the Baconian philosophy, and the *Novum Organon*, very incomplete in itself, when perfected, was destined to fill up only a portion of the scheme described in the *Instauratio Magna*, which was meant to include all the objects of human knowledge. Ethical science occupies one division of the treatise on the "Advancement of Learning," and the whole spirit of this work is opposed to any narrow views of the objects to be studied, or the ends to be gained, by the scientific inquirer. Mere practical utility is nowhere held up as the only purpose to be answered by the advancement of knowledge. Not unworthy in itself, it was not broad

* *Novum Organon.* Lib. I. Aphorism. xcv. † *Ibid.* Aph. cxxix.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and dignified enough to be considered by Bacon as the proper limit of endeavour. It is everywhere taken for granted, that knowledge is a sufficient good in itself, and, the desire to attain it being presupposed, the writer's chief care is to guide the student into the proper path, and to direct his efforts. This high appreciation of learning for its own sake cannot be better exhibited than in his own solemn and weighty words.

"Lastly; leaving the vulgar arguments, that by learning man excelleth man in that wherein man excelleth beasts; that by learning man ascendeth to the heavens and their motions, where in body he cannot come, and the like; let us conclude with the dignity and excellency of knowledge and learning in that whereunto man's nature doth most aspire, which is immortality or continuance; for to this tendeth generation, and raising of houses and families; to this buildings, foundations, and monuments; to this tendeth the desire of memory, fame, and celebration, and in effect the strength of all other human desires. We see then how far the monuments of wit and learning are more durable than the monuments of power, or of the hands. For have not the verses of Homer continued twenty-five hundred years, or more, without the loss of a syllable or letter; during which time, infinite palaces, temples, castles, cities, have been decayed and demolished? It is not possible to have the true pictures or statues of Cyrus, Alexander, Cæsar; no, nor of the kings or great personages of much later years; for the originals cannot last, and the copies cannot but lose of the life and truth. But the images of men's wits and knowledges remain in books, exempted from the wrong of time, and capable of perpetual renovation. Neither are they fitly to be called images, because they generate still, and cast their seeds in the minds of others, provoking and causing infinite actions and opinions in succeeding ages; so that, if the invention of the ship was thought so noble, which carrieth riches and commodities from place to place, and consociateth the most remote regions in participation of their fruits; how much more are letters to be magnified, which, as ships, pass through the vast seas of time, and make ages so distant to participate of the wisdom, illuminations, and inventions, the one of the other." — *Advancement of Learning*, pp. 100 – 102.

This is not the language of one who held that inventions and improvements in the arts, the gain of power and the increase of leisure and enjoyment by means of steam-engines, spinning-jennies, rail-roads, and the like, were the highest good to be obtained, and the noblest achievement of knowledge.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ships and commerce have made large additions to our dominion over the material universe, and to our physical comforts. But Bacon certainly did not consider the power and happiness thus obtained, as the greatest contribution of science to the well-being of mankind.

The question, which has excited some controversy, whether the philosophy of mind falls within the scope of Bacon's inquiry, and is to be prosecuted by his method, can be easily answered, when we have fairly determined what that philosophy is, and what forms its proper object. The first branch of it is Mental Science, or the Philosophy of the Mind, properly so called. Psychology is the latest term in common use, and is perhaps the most convenient one. Here we are concerned with the human mind, as a subject of observation and experiment, as the supposed seat or origin of various phenomena, that admit of number, arrangement, and classification. These phenomena, again, are not produced fortuitously, or at random, but are subject to fixed laws, more or less obvious, that may be definitely expressed. The phenomena are often complex, also, and need to be analyzed and reduced to their simplest elements. We speak of the science as confined entirely to the mind, without forgetting that one important point in it is the question, whether there be any such separate existence as the mind, distinct from matter. If this question be determined in the negative, it would appear, at first sight, that no division can be made, — that there is no room for any science separate from that, which treats of the laws and properties of bodies. Yet the subject is not really affected by the determination of this doubt. Every one is conscious of thinking, reasoning, willing; of pleasure, love, and hatred; and these qualities or phenomena are wholly unlike bulk, figure, extension, and other qualities usually attributed to matter. Now, we do not need to assume in the outset, that there is a separate existence or entity, in which the first class of these attributes inhere. There is no doubt that the two sets of phenomena are perfectly distinct from each other. There is no danger of confounding *them*. Avoiding all hypotheses, therefore, it may be said that psychology treats of those properties which we learn from consciousness; physical science of those that we know through the senses.

If this view is correct, if psychology is a science founded

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on the observation of facts, and proceeding by successive generalizations, then the Baconian method is as applicable to it as to any other. It was so considered by Bacon himself, as appears from his very explicit language. "For human knowledge which concerns the mind has two parts; the one that inquireth of the substance or nature of the soul or mind; the other that inquireth of the faculties or functions thereof." And again; "For we as much collect a history, and form tables, concerning anger, fear, shame, and the like, and also concerning examples from civil life, and as much concerning the intellectual operations of memory, combination and partition, judgment and the others, as concerning heat and cold, or light, or vegetation, or such things." If further proof were wanting, we might refer to the writings of Berkeley, Hartley, Reid, and others, as affording many happy instances of the successful application of the inductive method to this part of the philosophy of mind.

The other branch of mental philosophy is far more comprehensive, and embraces all that is usually denominated Metaphysics. All science proceeds from one generalization to another; and must end therefore at a point, — in a science that surveys the bases of all the others, determines their proper relations, and binds the whole into one orderly system of knowledge. It is true, that the word is commonly used in a more loose and popular sense than the one here indicated; but the definition is sufficiently broad to include all the questions usually discussed by metaphysical writers, and it coincides exactly with Bacon's division of the science. "Of Natural Philosophy the basis is Natural History, the stage next the basis is Physic, the stage next the vertical point is Metaphysic." This last is concerned only with first principles; it deals with a class of questions lying at the roots of other sciences, but usually passed over by the inquirer on the main subject, either from a fear that the discussion will lead too far from his proper track, or that the problems are insoluble, or that the solution may be taken for granted without affecting the remainder of the inquiry. Thus the psychologist studies the phenomena of mind, and the law of their arrangement, succession, and mutual dependence, putting aside, as we have done above, the question respecting the real nature of the thinking principle, and the efficient cause of the changes which it exhibits. So the student of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

physical science investigates the properties of bodies, and their mode of acting on each other, leaving quite out of view the problem respecting the essence of matter, and the *formal causes*, or internal constitution, of particular bodies, by virtue of which they exhibit their appropriate qualities, and are what they are. The latter portion of this problem, indeed, Lord Bacon seems to consider as forming the chief, if not the only, business of the metaphysician, though his province is now commonly understood to include the whole of the inquiries thus waved by the psychologist and the man of science, together with some others, that we proceed to notice. The ancients, it may be remarked in passing, unwisely confounded the two branches of investigation, and fancied that they were studying nature, when they were only cavilling about abstruse questions of the kind above mentioned. Their physics were all metaphysics.

Ethical philosophy treats of the rights and duties of moral beings. It considers man as a responsible agent, the subject of moral laws as absolute and imperative as those of an organic nature, which govern his material existence. But every question respecting duty and merit presupposes the free agency of man. Laws relating to conduct imply obligation and responsibility, and neither of these can exist without the power of determining our own actions. The dark problem of the freedom of the will, therefore, lies at the gate-way of all ethical inquiries, and most writers on the subject are content to hurry by it as an ugly phantom, with which, they thank their stars, no one but a metaphysician has any thing to do. Even the mathematician, in the axioms which form the basis of his science, and especially in the infinitesimal quantities, which he finds so useful at every stage of his progress, leaves behind him curious and subtile problems for the metaphysical inquirer to solve. The theologian, so far as he is concerned with natural religion, refers a portion of his difficulties, and those which lie the nearest to the starting-point of his inquiry, for the same person to consider and resolve.

Lastly, at the root of all science lies the question respecting the nature, orgin, and certainty of knowledge itself. All study and research proceed from certain postulates, the truth of which is implied at the outset, and at every step of our progress. We rely on the fidelity of the senses, on the in-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

formation afforded by consciousness, memory, and the organs of observation. No inquirer thinks it necessary to examine the foundations of belief in general, for his own science is not more concerned than any other with the common basis of investigation. He is content to rest upon the common ground, leaving it to others to ascertain what the nature of belief is, and why it is granted in some cases and withheld in others. But this fundamental inquiry is a problem that we cannot wholly wink out of sight. The answer to it must deeply affect our views of the dignity of human nature, and the certainty of human knowledge. It is possible to indulge a comprehensive skepticism, that affects not merely our trust in one proposition or one science, however important, but undermines the whole fabric of belief, and creates doubts respecting our capacity for progress of any kind. The broad problem respecting the origin of knowledge has been agitated again and again by a class of inquirers reluctant to abandon the attempt altogether, yet half conscious that it transcends the farthest reach of their faculties. How is experience possible? — is the question, according to Kant, that lies at the threshold of every system of metaphysics, which pretends to be called a science. His own solution is a mere evasion of the difficulty, and the problem remains, as before, a proof, that philosophers do not always succeed in dispelling the doubts, which their own speculations have raised.

If this view of the province of metaphysics be correct, it follows, that, far from being excluded from Bacon's inquiry, it covers the very position which he hoped to attain. It coincides very nearly with his *philosophia prima*, wherein he hoped to find the vantage-ground, from which to complete his survey and trial of all systems and all knowledge. It is the science of first principles, and of the highest generalization, being, to adopt his own metaphor, the stage next to the vertical point of the pyramid of truth. It underlies all the other sciences, constitutes a point of departure for them, and, if any important discoveries within its province are ever effected, it must materially affect their principles and mutual relations. But, in this particular, it is hardly wise to entertain any sanguine expectations. The problems of which it consists have been constantly agitated from the infancy of the human race down to the present time; but it would be hard to point out one difficulty that has been removed, or

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

one point that has been finally determined. Fortunately, they lie out of the path of the common inquirer, or they may be avoided by him without detriment to his further researches. If they are removed from this independent position, and mingled with common investigations in science, they invariably perplex and mislead the student. Standing by themselves, they may task the ingenuity of the disputant, and exercise the faculties of the lover of hardy speculation. If the attempt to solve them ends only in disappointment, the inquirer may console himself with the equal failure of those who have gone before, and with the indirect gain to his own powers of investigation, while engaged in the trial. We assent entirely to the remark of a writer, who was certainly not prejudiced in favor of this abstruse science, that "the chief value of such speculations will be found to consist in the exercise which they afford to the faculties, and the delight which is produced by the consciousness of intellectual exertion."

The question respecting the actual influence of Bacon's genius on the progress of science since his time, is a curious one, and is discussed with ability and learning by Mr. Hallam. But we must pass over this portion of his remarks, and come to the account of the writings and philosophical merits of Descartes. Dugald Stewart has given to this celebrated man the proud title of "Father of the experimental philosophy of the human mind." We can hardly admit that he deserves such a lofty appellation, though his services were great, and his influence on the course of speculation in Europe was conspicuous, and, for the most part, beneficial for more than a century, and can hardly be said to have ceased at the present day. Literary history presents few more instructive examples of the reciprocal workings of thought and action, than that which is found in the life and writings of René Descartes. His active life, — a busy and eventful one, — was designed, as he affirms, to be a preparation for his philosophical labors, and these last, in their turn, modified and directed his conduct and fortunes. His vocation was a peculiar one, and was selected very early in life; and he educated himself for it with great care, not only in the academy and the closet, by books and lectures, but also in the crowded camp, on the battle-field, in the amusements of a great metropolis and the dissipation of a court, and,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

finally, in entire seclusion from the world. He gave an account of his life, and the progress of his studies, in the "Discourse upon Method," the first of his philosophical publications. The narrative is a curious one, and we may rely in the main on its candor and truth, though it is doubtful whether his early career was governed exclusively by a single principle, and directed with such unity of purpose, as he represents, and as it probably appeared to him, when reflecting upon it in the latter part of his life.

He was born in 1596, of a noble, though not a wealthy family in Touraine. At an early age, he was sent to school at La Flèche, to profit by the instruction of the Jesuits in the scholastic philosophy, which was then in vogue. The weakness of his health, particularly a complaint in his chest, procured for him a dispensation from the regular exercises of the seminary, and a permission to employ his leisure as he saw fit. This liberty he eagerly improved by reading every book that came in his way, whether good, bad, or indifferent. The result was unfortunate. He discovered such a conflict of opinions in science, so much disputation and uncertainty in philosophy, and such imperfect aids to investigation in the systems of logic which were then in use, that the pursuit of truth under the guidance of former inquirers seemed a hopeless task. Mathematics afforded him some relief, and he studied this science with ardor and success. But the field here was too narrow for his ambitious and grasping intellect, and he sought in vain for demonstrative evidence in the other sciences.

He resolved, therefore, to give up his books, and to seek for the elements of a better philosophy in active life, — to study henceforth only the great volume of the world. He thought that men must regulate their daily conduct on more correct data and by sounder principles, than could be found in books, or they could not succeed so well. By mingling in their pursuits, and quitting the beaten paths of study, he might ascertain their rules of conduct, and apply them for his own guidance in erecting a new system of knowledge. If we may trust his own account, these were the meditations of a boy of sixteen.

At this age, he quitted La Flèche and went to Paris, where he remained for four years. A portion of this time he spent in study, devoting himself chiefly to mathematics,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and laying the foundation of those discoveries in geometry, which are among his most important contributions to science. The remainder of the period he gave up freely to the amusements and dissipation of the metropolis. At the age of twenty he entered the army as a volunteer, and in the employ of Prince Maurice of Nassau, and, subsequently, of the Duke of Bavaria and the Emperor Ferdinand the Second, he saw much service and became fully acquainted with the military profession. He was present at the great battle of Prague, and on that and other occasions is said to have distinguished himself in arms. Yet he disliked the employment, and had a particular aversion to tumult and bloodshed. This dislike enabled him the better to keep his original purpose constantly in view, and to make all his experience subservient to the great object of constructing a new system of inquiry and belief. Becoming weary of military life, he resigned his commission, and spent several years in travelling. He visited Denmark, Hungary, and Italy, and spent a year or two at Paris, and as much at his birthplace. With a temperament naturally sanguine and enthusiastic, constant meditation on his magnificent plans so heated his brain, that he was in danger of becoming insane. He had remarkable dreams for three nights in succession, in which it seemed that the great road to truth, the object of his constant search, was pointed out to him by divine aid, and a method indicated for establishing all science on an immovable basis. When he waked, of course, he could remember nothing distinctly, but he vowed that he would make a pilgrimage to Loretto, if he should ever be so happy as to recover these mysterious revelations. The same feverish turn of mind was perceptible in his devotion for a time to the doctrines of the Rosicrucians, a sect of mystifying quacks, who first came into notice about this period. But he soon detected the emptiness of their professions, and quitted them in disgust. At the age of thirty-three he went to Holland, intending to fix his abode there, and prepare for the world the fruits of his meditations and varied researches.

And what had he gained from his extended travels, his renunciation of books, his military service, his twenty years' observation of men and things? At first view, it appeared that all had profited him little or nothing. He had found that common men engaged in active life were no wiser than

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

books and philosophers; that opinions differed as widely in the mass, and fluctuated as rapidly in the individual; that all persons relied on probabilities, because they could not attain to demonstration; and that they did not arrive at a knowledge of the truth, because they were drawn away from its pursuit by the alluring chase after authority and pleasure. Still, it seemed that he had derived from his experience some advantage in the discipline of his faculties, and the perception of the causes of the errors committed by others; and he now wished to live in perfect retirement, that he might have leisure to mature his thoughts, and to prosecute his researches. He confided the secret of his retreat to one friend only, that his necessary correspondence by letters might be kept up, and changed his habitation frequently, that he might avoid the search of others, and any interruption from visiters, whom he detested. He was naturally timid, and the persecutions that Galileo was undergoing, deterred him for a long time from publishing any of his speculations. Overcome at last by the solicitations of friends, who knew the importance of his researches, he gave to the world his treatise "upon Method," first published in 1637.

The character of Descartes appears with as much distinctness in this short treatise, as in the preceding sketch of his early career. He was a bold and independent thinker, with a mind exercised by the severe discipline of mathematical study, and freed through his long intercourse with the world from the prejudices of the closet and the narrowing influences of exclusively scholastic pursuits. His boldness inclined even to arrogance, and he was not always willing to allow to others the same freedom of inquiry which he claimed for himself. He easily detected the fallacies and assumptions of the philosophical systems which were then current, and he aspired to erect one in their place, which should stand on as firm a basis, and be secured with as much method and strength, as the science of the geometer. The structure was to be entirely his own, and to include none of the forms or the materials of the theories which it was intended to displace. He had observed, he says, that works executed by one hand were more regular, and the parts more harmonious and better fitted to each other, than those which united the contributions of different minds and successive ages. The political constitution of Lacedæmon excelled that of the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

other states of Greece, because it was the work of one mind, and came perfect from the conception of a single artificer. "I had remarked, also, that, in forming opinions on obscure subjects, it was unsafe to be influenced by the example of the greatest number, for one was often more likely to find the truth than many. Instead of choosing, therefore, among the judgments of others, I thought it right to form an opinion for myself. But as those who walk by night proceed with slow and cautious steps, I resolved to look carefully around, so that if I did not advance fast, there might at least be no danger of falling." He determined, therefore, to admit nothing except upon clear and certain evidence, to avoid precipitation in forming his judgments, to divide difficult questions into several parts and examine each in succession, and to treat all subjects of investigation in a certain order, beginning with the simplest, and rising by degrees to the more difficult and abstruse.

These rules are sufficiently simple and obvious; but it would be difficult to find any speculative writer, before the time of Bacon and Descartes, who successfully reduced them to practice. There was no great merit in the mere enunciation of them even at that period; but to adhere to them with great closeness and fidelity in the exposition of a new theory of knowledge, affords proof of no ordinary strength and discipline of mind. The methodical and cautious manner in which he conducted his researches, and his strict adherence to the principles which he had established, had a happy influence on the formation of his style, which is a model of correctness, perspicuity, and good taste. He was rather imperious in disputation, and he certainly showed no lack of confidence in his own powers when he proposed his scheme for a thorough reform in philosophy. But his language at the commencement of his work was sufficiently subdued and modest. "I may be deceived," he says, "and these may be nothing more than glass and pebbles, which I am here offering for gold and precious stones. I know how subject we are to errors, and how doubtful is the favorable testimony of friends. I do not intend, therefore, to point out a universal method of seeking after truth, but to describe the road on which I have travelled. The narration will at least serve the purpose of a history or a fable; among some things which it will be well to imitate, others may be found, which ought carefully to be avoided."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The philosophy of Descartes deserves attention and respect, not more from the mixture of important truths with the errors which it contains, than from the excellent spirit in which it was conceived, and the uniformity and careful adherence to principle, with which it was carried out. If we except the writings of Bacon, which were published but a few years before the "Discourse upon Method," and which Descartes probably had not seen, it was the first steady assertion of the right of free inquiry in speculative science, after the bondage of thought for ages. It was the first distinct repudiation on the Continent of the infallibility of the ancients, the superiority of their modes of inquiry, and the authority of the established schools, — the first attempt to found a theory of science on independent research and the dictates of common sense. It differed from the philosophy of Bacon, in that its own principles were reduced to practice, and an attempt was made to execute the work, for which the former proposed only to show the way. Bacon invented a method, while Descartes erected a system. Viewed as a whole, this system was defective and unsound, though it contained the germs of many truths. It had the inherent vice of an entire theory, which Bacon himself exposed in the most pregnant and forcible terms.

"Another error, of a diverse nature from all the former, is the over early and peremptory reduction of knowledge into arts and methods; from which time commonly sciences receive small or no augmentation. But as young men, when they knit and shape perfectly, do seldom grow to a farther stature; so knowledge, while it is in aphorisms and observations, it is in growth; but, when it once is comprehended in exact methods, it may perchance be farther polished and illustrated, and accommodated for use and practice; but it increaseth no more in bulk and substance." — *Advancement of Learning*, p. 55.

Misled by the example of the geometer, Descartes selected what may be termed the *a priori* method in speculation, — adopting a principle or a fact as the basis of the inquiry, and reasoning down from that to inferior truths. The chain of his philosophy begins with his own existence, and proceeds to the reality of a First Cause, the being of a God, on whose veracity the whole strength of the subsequent convictions is made to depend. He began by doubting every thing, by refusing to admit the validity of mathematical evi-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dence, the existence of outward things, of his own body, or even of himself. Universal skepticism, he maintains, is the true point of departure in philosophy, for this alone can save us from the admission of error, though it does not carry us forward a step on the road to truth. How can I rise from this abyss of unbelief? I doubt every thing; but to doubt is to think, and thought implies existence. *I think; therefore I am.* Hence, it appears that my own existence may be taken as a sure basis, on which to build a system of belief. I will begin with this, resolved to admit nothing as a philosophical truth, which may not be deduced from it by strict and accurate reasoning. But I have already supposed the non-existence of the outward world and of my own body, and it is evident that my own being is not affected by the want of them. The essence of my being, therefore, consists in thought, and is wholly independent of place, body, or any material thing. This being or entity, then, of which thought is the essence, is more easily known than the body, and may be conceived to exist, though the body were destroyed. What is it? A thinking being, — that is, an existence capable of knowing, doubting, affirming, denying, and susceptible of pleasure and pain. But I may have experienced all these states without knowing any thing of the qualities or laws of matter, and therefore the study of matter can avail me nothing in the study of my mental constitution. Whatever is admissible by the senses, whatever can be pictured by the imagination as an outward thing, cannot be subservient to the knowledge of mind.

The next step in the theory, the proof of the being of a God, we had occasion to examine at length in a recent number of this Journal, and therefore we pass over it at present.* Having established the fact, that a perfect being exists, Descartes immediately deduces from it a ground of belief in the reality of the external world and in the legitimate inferences of the understanding. For a perfect being cannot wilfully deceive his creatures, and therefore the faculties with which he has endowed us, when exercised within their established limits and confined to their proper objects, are worthy of trust. In other words, we are not liable to any errors but those which arise from the imperfect or unguarded use of the

* See *North American Review*, Vol. LIV. pp. 120 *et seq.*, 362 *et seq.*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

senses and the understanding, and which may be ascertained and corrected by due care and diligence. According to this system, it is obvious, that even the intuitive convictions of the reason, — the axioms of geometry, for instance, — do not merit confidence for their own sake, or because they are absolute and universal, but we rely upon them through our trust in the wisdom and goodness of God. The fallacy of this method is very apparent; for the credibility of intuition is made to depend upon a preceding argument; and, whether demonstrative or not, this argument owes its only efficacy to the intuitive convictions on which it is built. More briefly, intuition is admitted on demonstrative evidence, though the demonstration itself is founded upon an intuition.

The great merit of the Cartesian theory consists in the distinct recognition of personal existence, as implied in every act of the understanding, and in the admirable argument for the immateriality of the thinking principle. These are the great services which the author rendered to the philosophy of mind, and they certainly go far to justify the praise, which is awarded to him by the historians of the science. The distinct enunciation of these truths by Descartes, and the publication of the works of Bacon, make the commencement of the seventeenth century an era of great importance in the history of opinions. Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, and Descartes himself had already commenced the brilliant career of modern discovery in physical science. The two whose character and writings we have briefly noticed, accomplished as much for the philosophy of mind. Differing widely from each other in doctrine and in the systems of knowledge which they respectively advocated, we find a similar spirit pervading the works of both, the same contempt for the puerilities of the scholastic philosophy, the same freedom and originality of thought, and equally broad and generous views respecting the scope of human endeavour and the future progress of truth. Their labors have been partially superseded by that happy law of progress, which causes the mediocrity of one age to surpass the greater originality and power of its immediate predecessor. But their works will continue to be studied, as occupying a prominent place in the history of philosophy, and as curious monuments of the power and fertility of human genius.

Mr. Hallam's work is so rich in topics of interest, that we

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have already gone beyond the proper limits of an article, in rather desultory remarks suggested by only a small portion of his labors. We close with the expression of gratitude to him for undertaking an important and difficult task, and of respect for the ability, learning, and taste, with which it is executed.

ART. IV. — *Journal and Letters of the late Samuel Curwen, Judge of Admiralty, &c.; an American Refugee in England from* 1775 *to* 1784, *comprising Remarks on the Prominent Men and Measures of that Period. To which are added Biographical Notices of many American Loyalists and other Eminent Persons.* By GEORGE ATKINSON WARD. New York. 1842. 8vo. pp. 580.

BUT a few months ago, we did our best to introduce to public notice a very modest biography of one of the most respectable of the American loyalists during the Revolution.* Believing that the time was past when the topic could not be touched without giving rise to angry passions, we undertook to treat it, as we should any question of mere historical interest, with mildness and impartiality. The idea of harbouring vindictive feelings against individuals long since deceased, who were sufficiently punished during their lives for whatsoever offences they may have committed, is ridiculous. If we understand ourselves in the least, our disposition is to do to the unfortunate class of whom we speak, nothing less than strict justice; to weigh with deliberation every argument that may be urged in their favor, and to censure, if this be necessary, only where censure appears to be a duty. In such a spirit we took up the life of Mr. Van Schaack. In the same we now take up the book before us. And if, in the treatment of the two, there should be any difference perceptible, the cause must be found not so much in us, as in the works themselves. Of the individuals concerned, we knew equally little before these attempts were made to bring them forward to the public observation.

* See *North American Review*, Vol. LV. pp. 97 *et seq.*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Judge Curwen was a native of Salem, in Massachusetts, and was descended from a family of wealth and respectability in that ancient town. His intercourse was, therefore, with persons of whom those who live in the vicinity necessarily know something, and he is connected with events that still interest all of us at this day. He appears to have lived much in the society where the liberty doctrines were voted rank heresy, and to have sympathized with those advocates of the British sovereign's prerogative, who, like himself, basked in the smiles of government favor. To be sure, the number of these was not, relatively to the whole population, very great, but it was considerably larger than most of the present generation are apt to imagine. Nearly all of the judicial bench, most of the leading members at the bar, all the officers attached to the custom-house, a considerable number of the graduates of Harvard University, many leading merchants, and most of the fashionable gentry, must be ranked upon the Tory side at the commencement of the struggle. Comparatively few persevered in their principles, at the cost of banishment and the confiscation of their property. But some did so, and it has been one of the objects of the editor of this book to gather in it such information relative to their fate, as might still be of general interest. Efforts of the same kind have lately been made in other quarters, and all with very indifferent success. Probably if their history were known, it would be comprised in few words. Like trees, transplanted after they have attained maturity, they experienced a blight of their prosperity and vigor, which no length of time could entirely remedy. The most fortunate repaired to other possessions of Great Britain, there to contribute to the formation of new systems of colonial vassalage, in return for the royal bounty not very graciously accorded to them ; whilst the remainder struggled on, in the home of their preference, with insult and neglect whilst living, and died at last unpitied and unknown.

Judge Curwen was one of those who had the good sense not to sacrifice himself entirely to an ungrateful step-mother. The volume before us is made up for the most part of extracts from his Diary, through which, with some assistance of the editor, we learn the following particulars respecting him. He received his education at Cambridge, and afterwards engaged with various success in commerce. He

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

however embarked with zeal in the expedition against Louisburg in 1745, and served as a captain in one of the New England companies during the siege. In 1759 he was appointed Impost Officer for Essex county, which office he filled for fifteen years. This must have been up to the period of his leaving the country as a refugee, when we are told that he was also Judge of Admiralty. Under such obligations as these favors conferred, it can be matter of no surprise, that his name should be found in the list of those who offered to Governor Hutchinson an address of sympathy upon his departure from the colony. Some of these addresses (for there were several of them), which raised a violent flame in the colony against the signers, are republished in the present volume, together with the recantation that was made by a portion of them out of terror at the popular indignation. Of that portion Judge Curwen was not one. And, as a consequence of his perseverance, he was obliged to fly for safety, first to Philadelphia, and thence to the mother country. There he remained until the war was over. But, finding things not to his liking in Great Britain, and his property having been saved from confiscation, and himself from outlawry, at home, he in 1784 made the best of his way back to Salem, where he dwelt in quiet seclusion, until his death, at a very advanced age, in 1802.

Having thus given an abstract of all the material points in the life of the gentleman who is the subject of this book, before we proceed to extract such passages from the Diary as appear worthy of notice, we would dwell a moment upon the manner in which the editor has performed his task. Of his diligence and fidelity we can say much in commendation; but we must admit, that we have been unable to keep pace with him in the sentiments, which he everywhere rather insinuates, than expresses, of the American Revolution. And we are not sure that he has paid even that exact attention to his style, which should free it from those ambiguities and inaccuracies too often committed in America from mere carelessness, for us to feel justified in overlooking them altogether. We propose to give examples in explanation of each objection as we go on. And first, we will quote a passage from the Preface, where, speaking of the subject of the memoir, he says;

"Another inducement for [to?] the publication is furnished

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

by the incidental light thrown upon the character of his brethren in exile, of whom scarcely any now survive, but whose numerous descendants feel a deep sense of the injustice, to which most of them, in a season of great popular excitement, were unfortunately subjected, who, under less adverse circumstances, had filled with honor civil posts of high trust, and led to victory our arms in the provincial wars. As the just fame of such as have distinguished themselves in important public concerns has ever been esteemed among the most valued treasures of civilized nations, that of these loyalists, banished for opinion's sake, seems to call for a proper vindication at the hands of an impartial posterity, while the contrast of their later with their earlier fortunes presents strong claims to the sympathy of mankind.

"The success of recent publications in the department of historical writing having induced the belief, that the period has arrived, when a sealed book may be opened, and a dispassionate examination had of the circumstances connected with that portion of our history in which the character of this proscribed class of our countrymen is involved, this work is offered, with the hope of removing, to some extent, if not fully, whatever obloquy has been unjustly cast upon their names, and to show that they were, in many instances, not the less actuated by lofty principle, than those who embraced the popular opinions of the day, and adopted measures which resulted in such transcendent success." — pp. iii, iv.

Had this passage contained the expression of but a single casual opinion to be found in the book, we should not have deemed it worth while to take it up. Much allowance should always be made for the influence which any favorite pursuit will have at some moments in vitiating the judgment of the person engaged in it. But, to excuse such cases, that judgment should at least be seen to be always sound, where the particular bias is not strong enough to prevent its action. We do not perceive that this is the fact with Mr. Ward. The error which he commits in the Preface, reappears in almost every page of his composition in the volume; and it is for that reason we feel that we must, however reluctant, do our best to expose it. He surely needs not to be told, that his doctrine, if adopted, would destroy the standard of right and wrong in public conduct completely. If the only fault of the loyalists was, that they had to contend with adverse circumstances, and the injustice of a popular excitement against them, but for which they would have been high in honors

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

both civil and military, then it must follow, that the chief merit of their persecutors, as he styles them, consisted in their power and their ultimate success in doing wrong. The whole matter is thus reduced to a mere game of chance. But we understand men to be free agents, and that in all cases, where they are called on to act in public affairs, there is a choice between absolute right and wrong to be made, wholly independent of circumstances, prosperous or adverse. Even though we may not incline to doubt the purity of the motives under which they act, yet, in awarding praise or blame, we must try their conduct by some positive standard of excellence previously existing in our own minds.

If the editor had only claimed for the refugees honesty in the maintenance of their opinions, we should have had no disposition whatsoever, in many instances, to dispute it. Mr. Van Schaack's biographer asked for nothing more, and to that extent we were happy to be able to contribute to his gratification. But, when Mr. Ward goes further, and says, that the loyalists were "actuated by principles not less *lofty* than those who embraced the popular opinions of the day, and adopted measures which resulted in such transcendent success," we must demur to the use of the word *lofty* so applied, as well as to any comparison being made at all between the classes thus brought together. We must protest, moreover, against the use of all those terms, which imply that either popularity or success had any thing whatever to do with the merit of the opinions of the patriotic party. Such an insinuation does too great injustice to the men, who, through suffering and danger to their own lives, and to all they held dear in this world, established an independent government in the United States, for us to be willing to pass it by unnoticed. Success may, indeed, have given a share of brilliancy to the result in the eyes of the world, which did not absolutely belong to the principles at the foundation of the struggle; but had that result been different, misfortune could have done nothing to tarnish their intrinsic purity. The question was one of liberty or servitude. Had the decision of it been in favor of the latter, it might, perhaps, have exalted the refugees to temporary power at the expense of the country, but it could not have changed the nature of their conduct. Their reputation with posterity might have then been even less enviable than it now is.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The next passage, from the spirit of which we entirely dissent, is to be found in the Introductory Memoir.

"There does not appear to have been any cause for dissatisfaction in the colonies at that period (1763), and there was no complaint of the invasion of the rights of the people by any of the governments. Soon, however, the disturbance in England reached America, and the cry of 'Wilkes and liberty!' in London, was echoed in Boston, and resounded through the colonies.

"Accounts were received before the session of the legislature of Massachusetts, in 1764, that a bill had passed the House of Commons, imposing duties on articles heretofore exempted, which afforded a good opportunity to bring the officers of the crown into disrepute, should they attempt to carry the law into effect. All who were desirous of keeping up the authority of law, were branded with the name of *Tories;* their characters were assailed in the newspapers, and they were charged with promoting measures to restrict the natural and chartered rights and liberties of the people."— pp. 19, 20.

The first insinuation in this passage is, that the disturbances in England, consequent upon the outrage committed by government upon Mr. Wilkes, were the origin of the discontent which was manifested in the colonies upon the news of the passage of the Stamp Act. Or, in other words, that it was a spirit of dissatisfaction with government in general, communicated by sympathy from the mother country, that led to the difficulties in America, rather than any well-founded objection of principle to that measure. There is but one thing in this charge that surprises us; and that is, that an American should make it. For Hutchinson, the very author whom the editor blindly follows, admits, that the feelings of the colonists and their principles had always sided with the party called the *Whigs* in Great Britain. It need be no cause of surprise, therefore, if the cry of 'Wilkes and liberty!' did ring in Boston, when the principles of liberty were attacked in his person on the other side of the water. A similar cry had rung in the same place, when Charles the First undertook to make himself an arbitrary monarch there, and when James the Second lost his three kingdoms for a mass. But that had nothing to do with the passage of the Stamp Act. It had nothing to do with the grand discovery of Mr. George Grenville, that the colonies could be made to furnish part of the means with which to meet the annual

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

expenses of Great Britain. The same political obtuseness, probably, led to the attacks upon the colonies, which had prompted that upon Wilkes; but these were faults for which they only must be held responsible, who committed them, not they who were bound by their own principles to endeavour to correct them.

This naturally leads us to the other insinuation, contained in the extract already quoted. And this is, that the Stamp Act was opposed, not so much because it was an unauthorized stretch of power, submission to which would have tended to the subversion of every safeguard of civil liberty, as because "it afforded a good opportunity to bring the officers of the crown into disrepute." And, to grace the whole, it is added in a tone of complaint, that those, who were in favor of keeping up the authority of this most illegal law, "were branded with the name of Tories, and were charged in the newspapers with promoting measures to restrict the natural and chartered rights of the people." Very well. And was not the charge strictly true? And did not the persons, who took the course described, richly deserve the appellation they received, if, by that appellation, be understood, a disposition to sustain the prerogative of the sovereign, at the expense of the rights of the subject? Assuredly, if this is one of the examples of the *lofty* principle actuating the Loyalists, which we hear of in the editor's Preface, the American people will scarcely be disposed, even at this day, to aid him in removing any share of the obloquy, that has been cast upon their names.

The truth of the matter is simply this. The editor has most unfortunately suffered himself to be led astray, by putting implicit confidence in the third volume of Hutchinson's History. This has infected every thing he has written. He has even gone further, and allowed himself, we are willing and anxious to believe, accidentally, and with no evil design, to misstate the purport of the letters written by several distinguished gentlemen in Massachusetts, to solicit the publication of that volume. The passage we allude to is to be found at the close of the biographical notice of Hutchinson, appended to the body of the work, and runs as follows;

"Governor Hutchinson deserves great honor for his labors in regard to the History of Massachusetts, which he published from its settlement to the year 1760. In so high estimation was it

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

held, that, at the expiration of more than half a century after its publication, successful efforts were made by the most influential persons there, to obtain the unpublished part of this history, which they pronounced, '*a work of inestimable value, resting on the solid basis of utility and truth; the accuracy and fidelity of which were universally felt and acknowledged.*' These efforts of the government of Harvard College, the Historical Society, of Judge Davis, Governor Gore, Dr. Kirkland, Dr. Lowell, and James Savage, Esq., who secured the private circulation of five hundred copies before publication, and whose sentiments on the leading subject are at variance with those of its author, are proud testimonials of the character of Governor Hutchinson in the field of his labors and sacrifices, and amidst the descendants of his persecutors." — pp. 456, 457.

Now it may be owing to careless writing, or it may be intended, — we will not say which, though we believe the former ; — but the natural inference from this passage certainly is, that the gentlemen and the societies named, applied the words marked in emphatical characters, not to the published part of the History, but to that which was unpublished ; and, that they spoke with equal knowledge of the value of both. The fact is well known to be directly contrary to any such hypothesis. It must be obvious to all, that the application of any similar phrases to a portion of the History, in which the author himself was a very prominent, and not altogether a dispassionate, actor, would not be deemed quite so appropriate, as if it was confined to the earlier part, where no such objection to his fairness or impartiality can be made. We will undertake to vouch for "the descendants of his persecutors," that they never intended, by their compliments to what they had seen, to be understood as indorsing the libels upon their ancestors, contained in what they had not seen. Some of these same libels are copied *verbatim* by the editor, as biographical notices of the persons to whom they refer, without qualification or exception. We think this is giving to the book a degree of authority, which it does not deserve, and which no one, on this side of the Atlantic, who procured its publication, designed to confer. It certainly was an object of some interest to obtain it, and we very much wish, that another and similar effort could be made to procure the Autobiography, which still remains in the hands of Hutchinson's family. But we do not mean,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for all that, to be summoned to testify to the accuracy and fidelity of what we have never seen.

This is not the time, even were we disposed, to go into the question of the merits or demerits of that third volume. We expressed our own opinions of it in this journal not long after its publication, and we see nothing in that notice, which the lapse of time, or any other reason, leads us to regret having written.* Of Hutchinson, as a man, we cannot entertain the exalted opinion, which the editor expresses. We believe, that he was respectable in private life, but selfish, grasping, and profligate, as a politician. Above all, we know that he was born an American, had been cradled in the nursery of republican principles, had raised himself to general consideration among his fellows by the support of them, and that he sacrificed them for a mess of pottage. Imported governors might have written home, as they did, what they pleased, and we should have felt no surprise or indignation at it; but that a child of our own raising should have courted favor with the minister by advising restrictions upon the liberty of his brethren, is altogether too much for our philosophy. Whatever may have been the morality of the means, by which the discovery of this fact was made, it has nothing to do with the act or its motives. They must always stand forth in their naked deformity, as a warning to all crafty and aspiring politicians, of the punishment that may await them, when they leave the path of right.

We have now done with that very disagreeable portion of our task, which consists in finding fault with the spirit of an editor. We shall dismiss our notice of the literary execution much more briefly, and then proceed to make some comments upon the Diary and Letters of Judge Curwen himself. What we object to in the style is mere carelessness, by which the sense is either perverted, or imperfectly conveyed. The following examples may suffice.

"He [Judge Upham] possessed, in a remarkable degree, that rare talent, fine powers of conversation, of which Lord Bacon laid down the true rule, and indulged occasionally in a happy vein of satire." — p. 520.

---

* See *North American Review*, Vol. XXXVIII. pp. 134 *et seq.*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A very slight change would have avoided an awkward confusion between Lord Bacon and the Judge at the end of this sentence.

"Isaac Wilkins, of Westchester, New York, son of Martin Wilkins, Esq., who in infancy, at the decease of his father, an opulent planter, and an eminent man of the island of Jamaica, was brought to the province, and received the best education the country afforded. The former married Isabella Morris, a sister of that eloquent patriot and statesman, Gouverneur Morris." — p. 555.

As three persons appear to be spoken of in the first sentence, the use of the words "the former," as applied to two, is confusing.

"Col. Pickman married a daughter of Dr. Toppan, of Boston, and died at his native place in April, 1819, aged 79. He was a son of the Col. Pickman who died at Salem in 1773, aged 66; a member of the provincial council and judge of the common pleas, whose sisters married Curwen, Ward, and Ropes, the father of Judge Ropes, and whose brother Samuel was governor of Tortola. The first mentioned Col. Pickman left a number of children." — p. 512.

We should have supposed, that, by virtue of the semicolon, the junior Colonel Pickman was a member of the provincial council, &c., more particularly, as he was the first mentioned, and therefore probably most in honor. But we are led, by the last clause of the sentence, to infer, that the father was the man.

This kind of criticism is doubtless not of the first importance, and a book may be very good in spite of some errors in punctuation, or in the use of the relative pronoun. We admit this in all cases, but least willingly in those, where genealogy is in question. It is hard enough to master a pedigree, when laid down in the clearest manner. If the information is worth giving at all, it is certainly the duty of the giver, as well as for the interest of the receiver, that it should not be embarrassed by equivocal meanings. A very little industry will correct this defect, and we doubt not, that Mr. Ward, if this work should go to another edition, will manifest his obligation to us for calling his attention to it. A glance at the peerage books of Great Britain, where this business is much better understood than with us, would furnish some useful hints as to arrangement.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We proceed to some consideration of the character of Judge Curwen himself, as we see it depicted in the Journal and Letters before us. That he was highly respectable in private life, there can be no doubt; and, if he erred in his political course, some of the fault must be laid to his deficiency in moral courage, and more to the seductive influences of place. Among all the trials which await every political man, in the course of his career, none are, perhaps, more dangerous, than those which spring from the operation of official station upon his judgment and principles. Nine out of ten persons in such situations, after equivocating for a time, end by sacrificing the theoretical to the palpable. We can readily understand, why the Judge of Admiralty and Impost Officer for Essex county should find nothing in the measures of the British government to justify resistance, or even to excite dissatisfaction; and, in saying this, we mean no disparagement to the gentleman himself, who might have very honestly thought all the while, that his opinions were perfectly independent of personal considerations. We can readily understand the sincerity of his regret at the departure of Hutchinson, and of his joy at the arrival of General Gage, which he proved by signing the loyal addresses to those gentlemen, and still more by adhering to them, when others withdrew their names. After all, the sum and substance of the question, to him, consisted in the fact, that he had much to lose, and not much to gain, by revolution. Had he decided otherwise than he did, perhaps he might have merited the compliment of possessing lofty principles. As it was, he did not fall below the ordinary level of human nature.

The first entry which we find in the Diary, is dated at Philadelphia, 4 May, 1775, to which place, the Judge tells us, that he repaired, at the age of sixty, "in search of personal security, and those rights which he was denied at home." But it does not appear, that he found what he was seeking. Although his kinsman and correspondent did, to his no little embarrassment, salute him with the assurance, "We will protect you, though a Tory," he found some difficulty in procuring lodgings on account of his politics, and endured much mortification, as he says, in the cause of truth. This treatment, followed up by intimations, that his residence, if allowed at all, after it became known that he

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was "*an addresser*," would be unpleasant, determined him before two days had elapsed, to proceed to London. On the 10th of the same month, he was witness of the formal entry into Philadelphia of the Massachusetts delegates to the first Congress, "with every mark of respect that could be expressed." "Perceiving not the least disposition to accommodate matters anywhere," on the 12th he embarked in the same vessel that had brought him, and on the 3d of the succeeding July, arrived at Dover. The remainder of his Diary, and nearly all the Letters, belong to the period of nine years, during which he languished an exile in the country, whose cause he had adopted.

At first he seems to have been disposed to consider himself as a brand saved from the burning, and to mourn for the impending fate of the friends he left behind. In August he writes thus to one of his political associates.

"Instead of the languid measures hitherto pursued, more active ones will succeed, and then woe to poor Massachusetts, which, like the scape-goat, must bear the sins of many. Do urge our remaining friends to flee from the destruction, that will speedily overtake that devoted colony." — p. 38.

And again, in December;

"I will just hint what appears to be a matter of notoriety here; the opposition in Parliament is too inconsiderable in numbers, weight, and measures, to hinder the progress of administration in their plans respecting America. Both Houses repose entire confidence in the King and his ministers' resolution not to relinquish the idea of compelling the submission of all subjects, within the limits of the British Empire, to the authority of the supreme legislature; preparations for which are making, for increasing the number of troops, to be sent over time enough for a vigorous push next season. The events of war are uncertain, and victory is by many thought doubtful, — yet it is more than whispered by some, that America had better be dispeopled, than remain in its present state of anarchy, — much more independent. Should this idea regulate future measures, and should government despair of subduing them, one may, without the spirit of prophecy, see, beforehand, what terrible, destructive evils will then befall our poor, devoted, once happy country. 'O fortunatos,' etc. Very truly yours,

"S. CURWEN." — p. 41.

But the Americans were not destroyed quite so easily

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as the Judge's English acquaintances led him to expect. In the mean time the vaporing tone with which this kind of talk was daily repeated to him, grew less and less agreeable to his nerves. He felt that a share of the contempt, which was cast upon Americans in general, fell indirectly upon himself, and all who like him were invoking the interference of this superior power in family quarrels. And this feeling at last began to inspire a wish that his rebellious countrymen should show that they were not to be easily put down. On the 18th of December, 1776, he breaks out into the following strain ;

"It is my earnest wish the despised Americans may convince these conceited islanders, that, without regular standing armies, our continent can furnish brave soldiers, and judicious and expert commanders, by some knock-down irrefragable argument; for then, and not till then, may we expect generous or fair treatment. It piques my pride, I confess, to hear us called *our colonies*, *our plantations*, in such terms and with such airs, as if our property and persons were absolutely theirs, like the 'villains' and their cottages in the old feudal system, so long since abolished, though the spirit or leaven is not totally gone it seems." —p. 90.

And, in another place,

"In conversation with a gentleman at an ordinary, I observed in him the prevailing characteristic infirmity of this nation, rendering them both envied and hated by Europe, namely, an overweening conceit of English bravery, accompanied with a contempt for other nations ; which in this day of their distress they now feel the sad effects of, in the cool indifference the other states view her embarrassments, though without producing a reformation as far as I can perceive." —p. 354.

At about the date of the first extract, the Judge began to feel his money running low, with no remittances or prospect of any from home, and an increasing probability of an indefinite period of exile. He was relieved from anxiety by the good offices of Judge Sewall, whose representations at the Treasury procured for him an annual pension of a hundred pounds sterling, to be paid during the continuance of the troubles, but the payment of which was actually continued to him, so far as we can judge, after his return to America, and probably up to the time of his death. The only difficulty that

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

remained consisted in the want of active occupation to interest him. The refugees at first formed a club, the members of which dined together once a week; but this did not last long. The Judge then took to travelling over various portions of Great Britain, seeing all the sights, and searching for a cheap place of abode. But all would not do. He was not by temperament a sanguine man, and the progress of events depressed him more and more. He writes thus to one of his fellow exiles in August, 1777.

"A late rumor from the south, that had exhilarated our sinking spirits, is now momently abating of its credibility, though it was told in a way, and with circumstances, that induced a universal belief. The report I refer to, you must undoubtedly have heard. My faith in a speedy return to our native country is, as it has ever been, faint; those, on the contrary, with whom it is my fate to bear company, have cherished, and still please themselves with the fond, delusive hope, that the disturbances on the western continent will subside upon the least success of the British arms, and hourly expect to hear of General Burgoyne's arrival at Albany; from whence they date the end of the troubles there. But, supposing that to take place, I foresee a great deal to be done before the fierce spirits of the people in America will settle down into a submission to a power they dread and have been taught to detest. Besides, I cannot help thinking France will interpose, and prevent a future connexion between Great Britain and the colonies; perhaps, not thinking it prudent to declare whilst the recovery of them remains doubtful. This you may call a suggestion of fear, and it may be the effect of a sickly, disturbed imagination; I presume, however, I am not a singular instance." — p. 152.

It was not long before General Burgoyne sadly disappointed the expectations of his Tory friends, and France verified the apprehensions of the Judge. Changed indeed was then his tone, for, instead of predicting the instantaneous annihilation of his brethren in America, he now began to apprehend the ruin of the mother country, whose cause he had adopted. And, what is more, he began to invoke curses, neither few nor small, upon those who, he now saw, had been the creators of all the mischief. Take for example the following entry.

(1781.) "August 8. In conversation with Mr. Peters, was informed, that it is, and has been all along, the determination of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the cabinet, to set up the noblemen's claim against New-England charters, annihilate all of them, and reduce the surviving inhabitants to a state of villenage, or expel them. He says he has sufficient authority to assert this. Cruel, barbarous determination! May Heaven disappoint their cursed device against innocence, justice, right, humanity, and every laudable principle and virtue. May America and my countrymen, more dear to me than ever, be made acquainted with this more than brutal cruelty; may disappointment be the issue of their attempts; vexation and every evil the reward of such unexampled, oppressive, rapacious designs, for it is but yet in embryo, never, I hope, to see the light. I doubt not Heaven has in store ample revenge for this devoted country, whose rulers seem infatuated, and themselves on the verge of ruin thereby." — p. 322.

In noticing the memoir of Mr. Van Schaack, we took occasion to comment upon the cavalier manner in which many of the refugees were treated by the British, and upon the resentful feeling which it excited on their part towards these benefactors of their own choice. We think Judge Curwen's burst of indignation is more to his credit, in the preceding paragraph, than the apparent calmness of his informant. He must have felt that those who could suggest, or even whisper, projects of the sort alluded to, were not such men as he ought to have embarked his fortune to support. It is one of the remarkable features of the work before us, that it exposes distinctly to view the state of isolation in which American Tories, who had sacrificed their all to the mother country, were kept. They lived among themselves, associated with none but exiles, corresponded only with each other. "The situation of American Loyalists," says Jonathan Sewall, "is enough to have provoked Job's wife, if not Job himself;" and sure enough, it must have been so, when the outbursts of natural feeling in the Judge's heart, so far from creating any sympathy with him among the British, only had the effect of bringing him into suspicion.

On the 6th September, 1779, he notes down thus;

"Am informed that I am suspected to be an American spy, disaffected to government; this was reported by one Calhier, a violent hater of the inhabitants of the American continent, and of all its friends and well-wishers; his malice I despise, and his power to injure me with government I defy." — p. 221.

It was but poor compensation for a liability to such in-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sult, to be able to wander about and see the great bed of Ware, or to attend the ladies' disputing club at the King's Arms, Cornhill, and hear most delectably discussed that intensely interesting and useful question, "Was Adam or Eve most culpable in Paradise?" We doubt even if much real pleasure was to be derived in the private amusement hinted at in the following extract written at Brosely.

"Dined at the inn; company same as last evening; afterwards we all together walked to Surgeon Corbit's, our guide and attendant; S. Sewall and myself drank coffee with his spouse. Leaving this house, Judge Sewall and myself returned to the inn, where I passed a heavy, sleepy evening; S. Sewall was engaged in loyally celebrating General Clinton's success at Charleston, by discharging a two-pounder, half loaded, several times in a private garden." — p. 251.

This singularly edifying diversion of drinking coffee with Surgeon Corbit's spouse, or that still higher enjoyment of firing a two-pounder half loaded, in honor of the capture of a town in one's own country by a hostile army, could scarcely have paid for the absence of all the other pleasures which are ordinarily regarded as making life comfortable. Judge Curwen could not have estimated them very highly, for we find him, in the course of time, uttering strains of deep regret at his past conduct, as follows;

"It has been my wish, ever since I have been from my own home, that all who are in a state of exile, whether voluntary or not, except those immediately concerned in the revenue, who could not have remained in America, had been prudent enough to have kept their political opinions to themselves, especially after the frenzy had worked itself up so high in the minds of our zealous patriot neighbours, and remained at their own dwellings, and made the best shifts they could in these troubles. They might, I really think, have found themselves, for the most part, in less disagreeable circumstances than they now are; at least, I can truly say it respecting my own particular case. But the bad consequences of past errors are now only to be lessened by a prudent forbearance of harsh, reproachful language against the present rulers in the American colonies that remain in subjection to Congress authority; for, whatever you warm transatlantic Loyalists may think, it is probable, however the general war may terminate, there never will be established such a degree of British governmental authority in North America as will cause much matter of triumph to American refugees." — p. 323.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There is a moral in this change of tone, which deserves to be remembered through all the various phases political affairs assume in America. Judge Curwen had left this country principally through fear of the British power; and it was fitting, that one having no higher principle of action should deeply regret not having kept his opinions to himself when he found that fear ill grounded. Had he felt himself clearly in the right, after a profound examination of the principles at the bottom of the controversy, the consciousness of his being so would doubtless have sustained him, as it has done many a high-souled man, through trials infinitely harder than any he endured. But he appears not to have sought to rest upon any such basis. We look in vain through the book for any exposition of his deliberate conviction. The moment that the idea began to dawn upon his mind, that the Americans were not likely to be put down, his anxiety to return manifested itself. And it went on increasing, until he was able to bring about the desired end. We respect the feeling that prompted his wish, even when we cannot recognise in it the lofty principle, to which the editor seems so desirous to point our attention. The timidity, which seems to have been a prominent point of his character, reappears in a later part of his Diary in another form, when, writing of the course of the now independent States, he expresses the following apprehensions, thus far proved to have been idle.

"I am far from wishing ill to the cause of liberty, much less to that of my native country, to which, on the contrary, as a citizen of the world, and a friend of the inalienable rights of mankind, I wish every kind of good, but am equally far from thinking America has gained its delusively fancied prize by independence. By some congressional manœuvres of late, a train, I fear, is laid for the establishment of a power much more fatal to liberty than Great Britain durst have aimed at, whilst she could have retained any governmental authority there. Their liberation is a doubtful proof of the divine approbation of their cause. Many there thirsted after it, and so did the Israelites for a king, which God at length gave them, in his anger; and he has, I fear, given them their heart's desire by way of punishment for wantoning away those singularly great advantages of a civil, religious, and political nature, with which he had favored them above all people upon the face of the whole earth. They often were used to compare themselves to God's highly favored people, and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I truly think their case is not unlike; mercies and preservations as numerous, nor does their folly and ingratitude fail to finish the comparison." – p. 384.

It is worthy of remark, that, during all the long exile of the Judge, his wife appears to have remained very quietly at Salem, without the least inclination to cross the seas on his account. Neither does it appear, by any portion of his published Diary, that he was rendered the more uneasy in his mind on that account. Hardly an allusion to her occurs, even when he is writing and thinking of others at home. We recollect seeing but a single letter addressed to her, and this occurs towards the end of the book. It is kind in its tone, but by no means warm. In it he speaks of his return as still doubtful, and depending upon the temper of the people towards American absentees. But he does not speak of one other contingency, which, after that was settled in his favor, yet weighed in his mind against it. We allude to the one recorded in the Journal under the 5th of July, 1784, as follows;

"Went to the Treasury, and there received the agreeable information, that the commissioners had granted my petition to appoint an agent to receive my quarterly allowance after my departure from England, on making satisfactory proof of my being alive at the successive periods of payment. From this I date an end to my doubts respecting my embarkation; its issue time must reveal." — p. 411.

Very soon after the date of this entry he embarked for home, and the only remark which we find, upon his landing at the end of Long Wharf in Boston, is, that every thing on shore looked unaccountably low, mean, and diminutive to him. He appears to have taken little or no pleasure in visiting, under such very altered circumstances, the scenes for which he had, when absent, so earnestly longed. Perhaps this is exactly human nature, and the Judge does no more than artlessly expose the little sensibility he had in his character; but we should perhaps take a deeper interest in his fallen fortunes, and his return to his native home, if we saw him moved to greater enthusiasm upon the event. At this point the Diary closes, and we take leave of the old gentleman, not without a feeling of respect, but moved to no sentiment either of affection or regret.

We have already mentioned the fact, that the editor has

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

appended nearly one hundred and fifty pages of biographical notices of eminent persons during the Revolution, and more particularly of royalists. Some of them contain curious and valuable information, which it was well to embody in a durable form. Others are mere transcripts from Hutchinson's third volume, which had been better left out. A few of the last pages are devoted to a somewhat extended notice of Samuel Quincy, whose greatest error seems to have been, that he allowed the attractions of office to overcome his principles. We think, that, whenever the editor shall make another effort to put the members of the two parties on the same footing as to *loftiness* of principles, he will do well to omit the letter written to the last-named person by his sister upon his departure from this country. There is a warmth and an earnestness about it, so animating, after going over the memorials of insensibility or time-serving, that we cannot better close this article than by extracting it entire.

"TO SAMUEL QUINCY.

"Braintree, May 11th, 1775.

"My Dear Brother, — I write this in hopes to put it into the letter my father has just written. If it should reach you, it may serve to convince you, that I have not forgotten that you are my *only* brother. He must judge what I feel, when I tell him that I fear I shall never see him again.

"Our two departed brothers died upon the seas. Some perhaps will say your body is sound; it may be so, but the sick in mind call for more than Esculapian aid.

"If any thing could surprise me *now*, the hearing of your going *home* would; but, of late, every thing that is marvellous and strange is to be expected. I have not time to enlarge upon the complicated distresses of our country, of families, or of individuals, but shall briefly say, that our connexions have experienced such a series of melancholy events as are not to be paralleled. We, my brother, I hope, can sympathize in sorrowing for the loss of a brother, whose character was, as far as any man's of his age ever was, unimpeachable.

"In his labors for the salvation of his country, he was indefatigable. His death, I hope, will prove a warning to others, not to pursue too eagerly *any point*. Nature, kept upon the stretch, will give way. He did not sufficiently consider the tenderness of his frame, and it may truly be said he fell a martyr in the cause of liberty.

"In the monody on our eldest brother, I find the following

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lines; they may, with equal propriety, be applied to the younger;

"'That heart, which late, inflamed with patriot zeal,
Braved the bold insults of its country's foe,
No more its pious frenzy can reveal,
Nor e'er in Freedom's cause again shall glow.'

"Let it not be told in America, and let it not be published in Great Britain, that a brother of such brothers fled from his country, the wife of his youth, the children of his affection, and from his aged sire, already bowed down with the loss of two sons, and by that of many more dear, though not so near connexions, to secure himself from the reproaches of his injured countrymen; and, to cover such a retreat, obliged to enlist as a sycophant under an obnoxious Hutchinson, who is a tool under a cruel North, and by them to be veered about, and at last to be blown aside with a cool 'To-morrow, Sir.'

"'Refusal, canst thou wear a smoother form?'

"My blood chills at the thought of the meanness of a seeker, and flames with indignation at such treatment from those in power. Arouse from your lethargy, — let reason take the helm; disregard all greatness but greatness of soul; then the little trappings that royalty can confer will lose their lustre, that false lustre, which I fear inclines you to the *prerogative* side. Spare me, and do not call what I have written impertinent, but ascribe it to the anxiety of a sister really distressed for thee. I behold you leaving your country, 'a land flowing with milk and honey,' and in which, as yet, iniquity of all kinds is punished, and its religion as yet free from idolatry, (how long it will continue so God only knows, — we have reason to fear a depredation on our religious system next,) for a country, where evil works are committed with impunity. Can you expect there to walk uprightly? Can you take fire into your bosom and not be burned?

"I take a long farewell, and wish you success in every laudable undertaking.

"Your affectionate sister,

"H. Lincoln."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ART. V. — *Œuvres d'* ALEXANDRE DUMAS. Bruxelles: Meline, Cans, et Compagnie. 1838–40. 4 Tomes.

ALEXANDER DUMAS is one of the most lively and popular writers in that new school of French literature and politics, which has attained its chief triumphs since the Revolution of 1830, though its origin may be traced a few years further back. The members of it are numerous and active, and the number and rapid succession of their publications show with what favor they are greeted by the public. In a recent number of this Journal,* we had occasion to sketch some of the characteristics of this school, when speaking particularly of the writings of *George Sand*. Our present subject is not equally attractive, for Dumas falls far short of Madame Dudevant in inventive genius and mastery of style. But his plays and novels show much talent, and afford very striking illustrations of the extraordinary *bouleversement* of taste and opinion, which is now exhibited by the reading public of France. The fertility of his pen, and the variety of subjects which he has treated, show a very ready and productive mind, stimulated by the public demand, and bent on reaping a present harvest from his popularity, rather than establishing a permanent reputation. The four ponderous octavo volumes, that lie before us, of about seven hundred pages each, printed in double columns, do not comprise the whole of his publications. Materials for a fifth volume have appeared since 1840, and still there are no signs of weariness on the part of the author or satiety on that of his readers. He appears in various characters, and writes on the most dissimilar topics, with equal liveliness and success. Novels, tragedies in prose and rhyme, history, political essays, and books of travels come from the same pen, and the family likeness betrays their common origin. His powers of invention appear to as much advantage in history as in romance, and the scenes and personages that he describes as a traveller, are very like the off-hand creations of the playwright and novelist.

France is not the only country in which literature begins to assume the aspect and undergo the mutations of trade.

* *North American Review*, Vol. LIII. pp. 103 *et seq.*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The author's profession is becoming as mechanical as that of the printer and the bookseller, being created by the same causes, and subject to the same laws. The nature of the supply seems likely to be as strictly proportioned to the demand, as in any other commercial operation. The public appetite will not be sated with the food, which the caprice of writers and the irregular distribution of natural genius may create. It must be gratified with its peculiar delicacies, its favorite cates ; and the means of satisfying it, in one way or another, are sure to be discovered. The publisher, in the name of his customers, calls for a particular kind of authorship, just as he would bespeak a dinner at a *restaurant ;* and, in preparing the required article, the cooks at the desk show as much versatility and readiness as their brethren in the kitchen. The great increase of the reading public, consequent on the diffusion of education and the cheapness of paper and print, is the great cause of this extraordinary cultivation of the art of book-making. The writer's profession becomes a lucrative one, when he ministers to the pleasures of so large a circle, who are willing to pay for the amusement and gratification, which he affords them. He no longer looks for his reward to the judgment of the judicious few, or the united voice of different countries and ages. He finds a more immediate recompense in the accounts of his bookseller and the applause of the multitude. And he is able to direct his course with a view to the attainment of this reward, and to disregard the higher motive. The mind is not so irresistibly inclined towards one pursuit or one kind of exertion, that it cannot be forced out of its channel. Successive efforts by different individuals, urged on by the popular voice and eager for gain, will be sure to create the desired product, however foreign it may be to their original taste or previously acquired habits.

The present literature of France seems to have grown up under influences of this character. It is not that the literary habits and preferences of individuals have changed, for it is impossible that the same persons at one period should relish the formal literature of the age of Louis the Fourteenth, and at another the extravagant Romanticism of the present day. But the changes in the constitution of society, and the improvements in the mechanical arts, have brought forward a new community of readers, whose taste differs from that of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the higher classes not more widely now, than it did a century ago, when it had not the power of manifesting itself and creating the appropriate means for its gratification. In a word, the democratic principle is now exerting as visible an influence in literature as in politics, the change being accompanied, in the beginning, with as much turmoil and as many ill effects in the one case as in the other, but destined in the end, as we may trust, to be productive of much good. A literature created for the people, if not by them, must always be characterized by greater energy and simplicity, by more excitement and a broader license, and by less polish and refinement, than one which is destined for a learned and aristocratic class. If it consist only of songs and ballads, these qualities will yet be manifested, though in a narrow sphere. But, when the progress of society has extended a certain degree of instruction to all classes, and rendered books accessible to all by cheapening their price, and when, moreover, it has lessened the weight of the authority and example of the few, removed the attachment to old established principles, and diminished the reverence for antiquity, we may expect that these characteristics will appear on a larger scale, and overpower for a time those laws of taste, which formerly enjoyed an undisputed supremacy. New sources of interest and amusement will be opened, and new fields of literary exertion entered, by men, who attach more importance to the number of their admirers, than to the basis on which the admiration rests. They will look to the quantity, and not the quality, of the praise obtained, and will measure their reputation by their substantial profits. Their productions will bear the popular stamp, — will represent the feelings and tastes, and be suited to the prejudices, of the multitude to whom they are addressed.

France has now been in an agitated, and at short intervals a revolutionary state, for more than half a century. A people very excitable by nature have had their enthusiasm kindled to the highest degree by great and rapid changes effected in their social and political condition. The sense of their own power has been animated by brilliant successes, checkered by sudden alternations of fortune, and resulting, to the mass of the people, in bitter disappointment. Great events have passed before their eyes with the rapidity with which the scenes shift upon the stage, and the mutability of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

private fortunes has outdone in real life the wonders of romance. Religion, since it lost its hold on the minds of the people, has been at times taken up and again laid aside as an implement of state, a part of the political machine. Moral restraints were swept away in the current of exciting passions, when the laws for the punishment of crime were involved in the downfall of political institutions, or their execution was forgotten in the hurry of those passing events, which absorbed the attention, as they involved the safety, of the government and the people. And these exciting changes, these convulsions in state affairs and in social life, have all occurred within a single lifetime. Many are still living who witnessed the opening scenes of the first revolution, who assisted in the destruction of the Bastille, and took the oath to support the constitution of 1789.

"A revolution in letters," says Victor Hugo, "is the necessary consequence of a political revolution." As applied to the recent history of France, the remark is certainly true, though it will not hold, if, by a revolution, we understand a mere change in the form of government, which often occurs without any great alteration in the habits or feelings of the people. But, when the change has affected all classes and conditions in the state, when their opinions as well as their circumstances have been modified and shaped by the course of political events, it is only a truism to say, that the literature of the people will also be revolutionized. It will undergo as rapid a metamorphosis, it will exhibit as strange features, as have appeared in the political aspect and condition of the country. Among the various branches of letters, prose fiction, poetry, and the drama will naturally be the first to show the influence of external events, and to appear under the most striking transformations. According as the writer's sphere of effort lies near to life and manners, or as his work pretends to display a copy or a shadow of real events and things, or to embody personal or national feelings, so will it contain the visible impress of those great occurrences, which have been operating upon the character of the people. After such a troublous period, as the last half-century has been for France, we might well expect that the imaginative and fanciful department of her literature would display more license, energy, and extravagance, than before; that more improbable fictions would be conceived, more fantastic poetry be

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

written, and a struggle of wilder passions be exhibited on the stage. It was impossible, that the old principles of taste, the stiff laws of a rather pedantic school of criticism, should any longer retain their supremacy. They were swept away with as much hurry and enthusiasm, as the National Assembly showed when they abrogated the remains of the Feudal system. In both these cases, a temporary anarchy succeeds. The nation was so eager to do away with the old law, that it is content for a time to remain without any substitute for it, — to be guided only by passion and impulse. When the novelty of such a state of things has ceased to charm, and its practical inconveniences begin to be felt, an attempt will be made to erect a new system, and once more to draw order and method out of chaos. French Romanticism is too violent and convulsive in its character to show much promise of long life or lasting effort. Its present fever heat will most probably be followed by a severe chill.

We have already hinted that Alexander Dumas, though at times a pleasing, and even a brilliant writer, and certainly a very acceptable one to his countrymen, is not the ablest or the most distinguished representative of the new school of prose fiction and the drama in France. He is too much of a hack author, adapting his works with great readiness and skill to the popular taste, but leaving upon them no strong and distinct image of his individual character. He is much inferior to Victor Hugo in invention, variety, picturesque description, and all the higher attributes of a poet and a dramatist; and to *George Sand* in the intense conception of passion and in eloquence of style. But he is very lively and graphic in manner, is often successful in the exhibition of character, and shows himself a thorough student of effect. His great aim apparently is to startle the reader, and his contrivances for this end are frequently happy, though sometimes they flash in the pan. But he is not capable of exciting the deeper passions, or of keeping up a strong emotion, while the effort to do so is very apparent. The influence of his dramatic experience is quite visible, even when he is occupied with prose fiction, history, or the medley which he calls *travels*; he is continually making points, that remind one strongly of the clap-traps of a third-rate tragedian. His figures are bold, and sometimes magnificent; but they are often marred by bad taste, and not unfrequently sink into bathos,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The secret of his popularity is found in his spirited narration, in his heaping together incidents of a striking but very improbable character, and in his free use of the wildest speculations and the most atrocious sentiments, which a lively fancy and a bad heart can devise.

To say that he is perfectly lawless and unprincipled in all that relates to art, propriety, or morals, is only to remind one of the school to which he belongs. In these respects, he is neither better nor worse than Balzac, *George Sand*, and a crowd of coadjutors. His favorite characters are jailbirds and cut-throats, who sometimes affect to disguise their villany with a parade of sentiment, and, at others, brazen the matter out with a disgusting brutality; and his incidents are drawn from the darkest annals of crime. No regard is paid to poetical justice, nor is any respect shown for the sympathies of the reader, as they are drawn out by the course of events; but the action is carried on with a view only to excite and astonish, and all minor considerations are sacrificed to the desire of weaving a fearful and absorbing tale. Poverty of invention is betrayed by a frequent recourse to history for some wild scene or striking event, though the truth is then so disguised and mixed up with fictitious and extravagant adjuncts, that the reader feels mocked with the presence of familiar names in connexion with incidents which are no longer recognised. We can easily imagine what passages such a writer would be likely to glean from the historian. The foul deeds of the Borgias, the tissue of intrigues and murders, which formed the policy of some of the profligate monarchs of France, the most fearful incidents of the Reign of Terror, — in short, whatever page in the annals of history is spotted with blood or stained with crime, has furnished Dumas with materials, which he has turned to account by exaggerating the horrors, and inventing minor incidents to increase the probability, of the tale.

Though our author sometimes inveighs against existing institutions and the customs of society, we cannot find that he has any particular grievance to avenge, or any favorite theory to inculcate. The invective does not come from the heart, nor are the writer's peculiar views urged with that sincerity and warmth, which belong to the passionate pleadings of *George Sand* and other theorists and innovators. He has evidently not been led astray by fantastic speculations,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and, provided his books sell, he probably cares little whether the public adopt or reject his opinions. In politics, he occasionally manifests more earnestness, for he is a furious republican; but, even here, we suspect there is a prudent reference to the wishes and prejudices of that part of the community, to whom his books are chiefly addressed, and no deeply grounded personal conviction. He seems to be more intent upon pleasing his readers, than upon altering the form of government. The indifference thus manifested rather aggravates his crime in setting forth pernicious doctrines and immoral sentiments; for one can pardon much error and extravagance, when the views set forth are honestly entertained and warmly defended. We have no doubt, for instance, that Madame Dudevant has really quarrelled with the laws of society, which she attacks, and that she espouses the wrong with something of a martyr's spirit. Dumas has a more cool and calculating temperament, and, if he were not a needy writer, he would probably be a peaceful subject.

Our author is of honorable, though not of wealthy, parentage. His father, Alexandre Dumas, obtained the rank of general in Napoleon's army, and served with some distinction in Egypt. He left his family nearly destitute, and the son, at twenty years of age, with a very imperfect education, came with his widowed mother to Paris, in the hope of obtaining some small post under government, the income of which would support them both. He gives a lively sketch of his reception by some of his father's old companions in arms, who were rich and powerful, but not much inclined to notice or assist the son of their former comrade. Only General Verdier and General Foy received him with interest and kindness, but unluckily they were both nearly as poor as himself. At last, through the intervention of the latter, he obtained an humble clerkship, with a salary of three hundred dollars a year, in the household of the present King, who was then only Duke of Orleans. This appeared a fortune to his mother and himself, and he immediately settled down in quiet at Paris, being employed at the office during a great part of the day and evening, and devoting his nights to study, in the hope of repairing the defects of his imperfect education. But the confinement of such an office, and the insufficiency of his salary, pressed severely upon an ardent temperament; and his independent conduct, according to his own

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

account, deprived him of the favor of his superiors. Urged by these circumstances, he turned his thoughts towards writing for the stage, which has long been the most lucrative department of literary exertion in France, since the law secures to the author a large share of the profits from the representation of his pieces. "Christine," a tragedy, or rather a drama, in verse, was his first effort, and it is still the most pleasing, and the least exceptionable of his performances. The play was accepted by the directors of the theatre, but some delay occurred in preparing it for the stage, and Dumas meanwhile wrote another, "Henry the Third and his Court," which was first represented, and had great success. The time occupied in attending the rehearsals caused him to neglect somewhat the duties of his office, and, receiving an intimation that he must choose between the theatre and his post, he immediately resigned the latter. These events took place in 1829, and since that year Dumas has been an author by profession, the number of his publications evincing his industry and the fertility of his talent.

His writings for the stage may be divided into two classes, the first including four tragedies in verse, "Christine," "The Alchymist," "Charles the Seventh," and "Caligula," which in form, though not in substance, follow the classical models of Corneille and Racine. In two of them the unities are strictly preserved, and in all, the fetters of rhyme operating as a happy restraint on the extravagance of his conceptions, the more offensive peculiarities of the Romantic school are scarcely visible. The second class comprises "Antony," "Richard Darlington," "Teresa," "Catherine Howard," and several other dramas in prose, which are most characteristic of the man, and of the school to which he belongs. Some of these, such as "Kean" and "Don Juan de Marana," — a bad copy and continuation of a bad original, — are as contemptible in point of execution, as they are execrable in design. The others show much talent, though polluted to the last degree by immorality, extravagance, and bad taste. They contain powerfully written scenes, affording admirable scope for the abilities of the performers, and have, consequently, been very successful upon the stage. The further representation of "Antony" was prohibited by the government, after it had been played for eighty successive nights; and some other interferences of this sort, proba-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bly, first kindled the republican zeal of the offended dramatist. "La Tour de Nesle," also, had a great run upon the stage; but it has subsequently appeared, that this play, although represented and printed as the production of Dumas, was actually written by another person, who has made good his title to the profits in a court of law. It is evident, however, from the style, that Dumas retouched and modelled the raw material; and the honor of originating such an extravagant picture of impurity and crime may be fairly divided between the two claimants.

As a specimen of the bold and striking style of Dumas, and to show with what vigor he conceives a subject, and how clear are his ideas of effect, we translate a portion of the preface to his "Caligula." Some of the expressions may appear offensive, if not impious, but we have softened, rather than exaggerated, the audacity of the original.

"Five years have elapsed since I conceived the plan of this tragedy; and, during that time, not a day has passed but I have labored upon it. It was not designed to be a work of sentiment, like 'Antony,' nor an improvised drama, like the 'Tower of Nesle,' nor yet, like 'Angela,' a picture of manners. The period, which it was to present, was obscurely known, or, what was worse, we had only false ideas respecting it; — a period, which, when we have arrived at a certain age, we look back upon only through the wearisome recollections of our college studies, and which it was necessary to build up again on the movable ground of the theatre, within the narrow limits of the stage, and according to the severe architecture of the unities.

"Add to this, that antiquity, as it is displayed in the tragedies of Voltaire's school, had fallen into such utter discredit, the sense of wearisomeness, with which it affected us, had become proverbial. It was not any thing new that I was about to attempt; it was rather a restoration.

"Therefore, when once resolved to undertake the work, I grudged no labor for its accomplishment. The imperfect reminiscences of college studies were effaced; the reading of the Latin authors appeared insufficient. I went to Italy, in order to see Rome; for, not being able to study the body, I wished at least to visit the tomb.

"I remained two months in the city of the Seven Hills, visiting the Vatican by day, and the Coliseum by night. But after I had reconstructed the whole in my imagination, from the Ma-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mertine Prisons, even to the Baths of Titus, I perceived, that I had seen only one face of the ancient Janus, — that grave and austere countenance, which had appeared to Corneille and Racine, and from its lips of bronze had dictated the 'Horatii' of the one, and the 'Britannicus' of the other.

"It was Naples, the beautiful Greek slave, which was to present to me the second face, hidden under the lava of Herculaneum and the ashes of Pompeii; — a face as sweet as an elegy of Tibullus, laughing as an ode of Horace, and mocking like a satire by Petronius. I descended into the excavations under Resina; I established myself in the house of the Faun; during eight days I waked and slept in a Roman habitation, — in actual contact with antiquity; — not the antiquity which Livy, Tacitus, and Virgil have transmitted to us, — grand, poetical, and almost divine; but antiquity familiar, material, and domestic, as it is revealed to us by Propertius, Martial, and Suetonius. Then the nation that wore the toga began to come down to me from its pedestal, to assume a palpable form, to exhibit a living countenance. I peopled these empty houses with their lost inhabitants, from the palace of the patrician down to the shop of the oil-merchant; and all the steps of that immense ladder, which reached from the emperor even to the slave, appeared to me in a dream like that of Jacob, covered with beings like ourselves, who were ascending and descending. This was not all. I went to them, I opened the tunic, I raised the cloak, I put aside the toga, and everywhere I found the man described by Homer and Diogenes, by Dante and by Swift, — with the stature of a dwarf, and the passions of a giant.

"Then, from the study of men, I attempted to pass to the knowledge of things. I endeavoured to form an intelligible account of those times, of which we have a history, but no explanation. I looked at the frantic emperors, and the enslaved people, — a hundred and sixty millions of men, victims of the cunning of a tiger, or the ferocity of a lion. I sought out a motive for these monstrous crimes, and for this unbounded patience; and I discovered one, by substituting faith for philosophy, and contemplating the Pagan world from a Christian point of view.

"At this epoch, Rome was not only the capital of the empire, but also the centre of the world. It resounded so loudly over the face of the earth, that not even a murmur could be heard from the other cities. Its houses covered the whole space from Tivoli to Ostia, from Ponte Molle to Albano. In this immense hive hummed, like bees, five millions of inhabitants, or about six times the population of Paris, and four times that of London. It had a magnificent garden, which reached from Vesuvius to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mount Genèvre; a voluptuous gynæceum, called Baiæ, a splendid villa, denominated Naples, and two immense granaries, Sicily and Egypt, always full of corn and maize. Moreover, either by stratagem or conquest, it had inherited the treasures of Babylon and Tyre, its ancestors, the commerce of Carthage and Alexandria, its rivals, and the learning of Athens, its instructress.

"From this centralization of men, wealth, and learning, there had resulted a strange mixture of manners, a frantic luxury, a corruption like that of Sodom. The Roman colossus, powerful as it was in appearance, experienced at times sudden shocks, quakings of the earth, and mysterious agitations. The earth was like a woman near the end of her travail; she felt the movements of her offspring, — the unknown progeny foretold by the salutation of the angels, and awaited by faith. The ancient world was opening in fissures from old age; a cleft was widening in the pagan Olympus, from the east even to the west; the universe was in a state of torpor, like that of a serpent changing its skin. A mortal shudder ran through this society, which tried to overcome the presentiment by its orgies, and, with a hand hot with revelling, endeavoured to wipe out with wine and blood, the fatal words traced by the finger of the angel on the reeking walls of its festivities. At last, Rome could no longer have trust either in earth or heaven; it was between a volcano and a tempest; it had the full catacombs under its feet, and over its head an empty Olympus.

"It was because it had just been chosen for the designs of the Almighty; — because, a predestined city, from a rock, it was to become a pharos; — because this immense crucible, wherein the human race was transformed by heat, was at the same time a gigantic mould, from which was to come forth a new world. As human revolutions, although conducted by the divine hand, can be accomplished only by human means, God willed to assault this fortress of iniquity, both at the summit and at the base; he sent madness upon the emperors, and faith to the enslaved. Behold, therefore, these Cæsars, from Tiberius even to Julian, when they have hardly attained the height which they call empire, how they are seized with a sudden vertigo, with wild insanity, with incredible blindness! See how their bloody rage foolishly destroys every thing, which might serve for their support, by striking at both the knights and the patricians, those natural props of every monarchy! See how the doomed nobility destroys itself, and, at a word, a gesture, on the command of its tyrant, holds out the throat, opens the veins, or perishes by famine! It is a thirst for death, a mania for

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

annihilation; and Rome has not a palace, that does not send forth death-rattles, cries, and groans.

"Now cast your eyes on the other extremity of society. In lieu of despair, behold consolation; instead of executioners armed with the axe, see old men bearing the cross and the Gospel; in place of a hand digging up the earth, a finger which points to heaven.

"Thus the anger of God descended upon the great, and his mercy was extended over the humble. These two messengers of the Almighty went to meet each other, the one coming down from the emperor to the people, the other ascending from the people to the emperor. They came together in the middle ranks of society, each having accomplished its work. From that time, there was a Pope instead of a Cæsar, martyrs in the place of gladiators, Christians and no more slaves. A second Genesis was accomplished; to the light of the eyes succeeded that of the soul. God had made a new world out of the wrecks of the ancient universe.

"When I had arrived at this point of view, one may imagine what poetical and sublime materials were offered to my mind by this struggle between dying paganism and nascent faith. My only other business was to select from these three ages of transformation, an epoch proper for the developement of my plan. The close of the reign of the successor of Tiberius appeared to me the best fitted for my theory respecting the action of Providence. Of the three types which I needed, history offered me two, and my imagination had long before conceived the third. These three were Messalina, Caligula, and Stella." — Vol. II. p. 659.

Dumas had not the power to execute the plan which he has here sketched with so much strength and clearness, though in a distorted and galvanized style. The topic is a magnificent one, but we question whether it is a tractable theme for the poet, and it certainly cannot be compressed within the narrower limits prescribed to the dramatist. "Caligula" contains some striking scenes, the action is carried on with much spirit, and the diction, though occasionally rough-hewn, is often rich and impressive. But far from embodying the poet's whole idea, no one would suspect, except from reading the preface, that he had such a lofty end in view, or that he designed any thing more than to represent with theatrical effect the frightful crimes and terrible death of the worst of the Roman emperors. The characters in general are feebly drawn, especially Stella, who was designed to be the impersonation of Christian faith and the martyr spirit.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Her belief, indeed, is only an accident in the story, dignifying her character, but in no wise affecting the course of events nor the termination of the tragedy. She is represented as the daughter of Caligula's nurse, and the action turns on her becoming the victim of the emperor's brutality, and being avenged by her mother and her betrothed. If she had been a pagan, the action might have led to the same issue ; and, though increased interest might attach to her, in the present case, from the higher belief and noble sentiments which she professes, this is precisely the advantage which our poet is incapable of using. He is wholly incapable of portraying ideal purity, faith, and excellence, and the attempt to accomplish such an end produces nothing but mawkish sentiment, or extravagance and bathos. But he is quite at home in delineating such a monster as Caligula, to whom history attributes as much ferocity and madness as Dumas is fond of representing in his fictitious heroes. The most natural and striking personage in the tragedy, or rather in the prologue to it, in which alone he appears, is Lepidus, a dissipated and reckless young patrician, but with some traces of high feeling, who, having been denounced to the emperor for using seditious language, opens his own veins in the bath, in order to escape a more ignominious death. The quickness and composure, with which the young trifler, when apprized of his danger, conceives his plan of forestalling the executioner, and goes jesting to his death, are brought out with great effect.

The union of strength and crime, the junction of a powerful intellect with violent passions and a bad heart, is the compound which our author loves to exhibit, both in his plays and in his prose fictions. With his usual exaggeration, he carries the first element so far that it appears superhuman, and he gives a degree of atrocity to the other, which augments the horror, as much as it lessens the credibility, of the tale. Alfred d'Alvimar, Richard Darlington, Marguerite, Antony, and Don Juan de Marana are all personations of unmitigated wickedness coupled with extraordinary power, and the course of events usually brings about the triumph of these demons, instead of their defeat and punishment. Dumas professes great admiration for Shakspeare, and seems to imagine that in this respect, as in many others, he is only following in the steps of the great dramatist. He forgets,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that the "mighty master" always qualifies guilt with some marks of compunction or some touches of natural feeling; or he shows the magnitude of the temptation together with the atrocity of the crime, and paints the struggle of conflicting desires which is thus occasioned; or, at most, wickedness is used only as a foil to virtue, and appears only in a subordinate part. Iago is perhaps the only character of unmixed and gratuitous evil in the whole Shakspearian gallery, and he was necessary, as a part of the ground on which Desdemona appears more silvery white and pure by the contrast, and as a means of preserving the beholder's sympathies for the noble Moor, when stimulated to foul injustice by the other's devices. It may be observed, also, that the character of Iago is the most unnatural one in the play, as appears by the anxiety of the reader to detect some other motives for his conduct, besides the insignificant pretexts which he assigns. We cannot accept at once and on trust such a union of a powerful mind and a black heart, and we search eagerly for some key to the enigma, — some cause or palliation of the crime. It is scarcely necessary to say, that Macbeth, Shylock, King John, and even Richard the Third have enough of good or noble qualities in them to preserve a portion of our esteem. Not so with the villains that our French dramatist is delighted to portray. He seeks only to startle the reader by the magnitude and gratuitous character of the crime, or by the atrocious motives which even heighten its guilt. And the effect is, when the interest is most absorbing, that we detest most heartily the writer and the book.

Before quitting "Caligula," we must cite a short passage, which shows either the extraordinary inaptitude of the French language for a certain class of subjects, or how dangerous it is for such writers as Dumas to venture upon Scriptural ground. In giving an account of her conversion, Stella narrates the story of Lazarus, as it was told to her by an eyewitness of his resurrection. It would be difficult to match the last verse as a specimen of bathos.

"Madeleine en pleurant tendit au ciel les bras!
Mais le Sauveur lui dit, Femme ne pleure pas.
Et marchant aussitôt vers le sépulchre avare
Où pour l'éternité s'était couché Lazare,
Jésus, devant le peuple immobile d'effroi,
Dit, étendant la main; Lazare, lève-toi!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A peine retenti cette voix tutélaire,
Que, brisant de son front le marbre tumulaire,
Lazare, obéissant au cri qui l'appela,
Se dressa dans sa tombe, en disant, ME VOILÀ!"

"Catherine Howard" is neither the most powerful nor the most absurd of our author's dramas, but it may be cited as a sample of his method of constructing a plot, and of his use of historical materials. Ethelwood, Duke of Dierham, is secretly married to Catherine Howard, who is of an ignoble family, and whom he retains in concealment near London, from his fear of the brutal passions of Henry the Eighth. She is accidentally seen by Fleming, the astrologer of the king, who is struck with her beauty, and, being ignorant that she is a married woman, proposes her as a wife to the monarch, after the dissolution of his match with Anne of Cleves. Henry, who has seen Catherine but once, and then without speaking to her, immediately accepts the proposal, and orders Ethelwood to bring up the beautiful damsel to court, and introduce her into the train of the princess Margaret, the king's sister. The husband, not daring to reveal the truth, applies to Fleming for advice, and obtains from him a draught, that will bring on the appearance of death for several days, but, at the end of this time, the patient will awake to life again. This potion being administered to Catherine, her apparent death follows, and she is placed in the burial vault, which is visited first by Ethelwood and then by Henry, who comes to mourn over her, and even places a nuptial ring on the finger of the seeming corpse; a sentimental act, of which one would hardly suspect the burly monarch. After the king has withdrawn, Catherine revives, and her husband explains to her what has passed, even to the circumstance of the ring, and then hurries her away in secret to one of his castles in the north.

The trials of the Duke of Dierham are not ended. The king visits him in the castle, where Catherine is concealed, and says that the princess Margaret has conceived an affection for him, and offers him her hand in marriage and the regency of the kingdom, while Henry himself is to be absent on an expedition against Scotland. Ethelwood wishes to refuse these proffers, and the king leaves him, menacing him with death and the confiscation of his estates. To

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

escape this danger, the unhappy husband resolves upon the use of the same means by which he had saved his wife. He drinks the remainder of Fleming's potion, and gives to Catherine two keys of the funeral vault, one of which, after his apparent death, is to be handed to the king, in conformity with the custom on the burial of an English nobleman, and with the other she is to open the tomb at the proper time, when the two can escape together, with a portion of his wealth, to France. But Catherine is intoxicated with the flattering love of the monarch, and the prospect of becoming queen of England, and she resolves, after a short struggle with herself, to leave her husband to perish in the vault. She seeks the presence of Henry, informs him that she had accidentally been buried alive, and had escaped, shows him the royal ring upon her finger, and, when the enraptured monarch offers at once to marry her, she secretly throws the key which she had received from Ethelwood into the Thames. The marriage takes place, but a singular chance saves the life of her first husband, and places the means of vengeance in his power. The princess Margaret obtains the other key, which had been delivered to the king, and, going to the vault to mourn over the object of her affections, finds him alive and brings him to the palace, where he remains concealed in her apartment. Remorse pursues Catherine after her elevation to the throne, and a few days afterwards she is terrified by the appearance of Ethelwood in her chamber, who upbraids her with the crime that she had attempted, and announces that her punishment is at hand. Henry returns while they are still together, and though Catherine bars the door against him, the duke persists in remaining there till the king has heard his voice in conversation, and then retires, leaving his cap on the sofa. The monarch bursts open the door, finds the cap, which confirms the suspicion excited by hearing a man's voice in the chamber, and goes away, menacing the queen with the fate of Anne Boleyn.

The trial of Catherine before the Peers now follows, and she is found guilty of adultery and treason, and condemned to death. But the young earl of Sussex demands the trial by combat in her favor, and generously offers himself as her champion. Proclamation being made to find a champion for the king, Ethelwood presents himself disguised in black armour, without announcing his name, and vanquishes Sussex.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The queen is now deprived of her last hope, and is visited in the Tower by the executioner, who comes to ask her pardon for the execution of his office. She suddenly conceives the design of bribing him to leave the kingdom, thinking that a delay of some days must occur before a substitute could be found, and that meanwhile the king might incline to mercy. The man yields to the offer of a diamond ring, and, when the hour arrives, no executioner is to be found, and Catherine is again excited by the hope of escape. But the herald offers a large reward for any one who will undertake the hateful office, and, a man in a mask presenting himself, the execution at last takes place. After the blow is struck, Ethelwood pulls off the mask and exclaims, — "I have stricken the guilty ; behold her accomplice ! "

Comment is unnecessary on this extraordinary mixture of history and fable, and the absurdity of every part of the story. But putting aside the extravagant improbability of the plot, it certainly offers a wide field for the actor's powers in the rapid changes of situation, the excitement of feeling with which they are attended, and the conflict of opposing passions, to which Catherine and Ethelwood are subject. It is difficult to select a scene which shall be a fair specimen of the execution of the work ; but our readers may form some ideas of it from a translation of Ethelwood's soliloquy on his first visit to the burial vault, before his wife has recovered from the trance.

"*Ethelwood.* Yes, Fleming has strictly kept his word. Her sleep is indeed the twin brother of death, and, if it were not my work, my own eyes would be deceived by the resemblance. How fragile is human existence ! A few drops extracted from certain plants are enough to interrupt it ; a few more would destroy it entirely, and the soul which once sparkled in these eyes that are now closed, which once animated the voice that is now mute, which gave life and thought to the body that is now motionless and cold, would depart for ever, and mount upwards to the source of things. What has become of it during this lethargy, which is more than sleep, and less than death ? Does it fly to the realm of dreams, does it sleep like a sacred lamp shut up in the tabernacle ? Is it gone to knock at the gate of that unknown world, which is called eternity ? And when the blood shall begin again to circulate in the veins, when the thought shall return to animate the understanding, and this soul, exiled for a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

time, shall again enter into the body, like a queen into her palace, will it have recollection of the objects of this world, or of the things of heaven, which it will have seen during these two days? Oh, I can conceive that the assassin should feel no remorse at the sight of his victim, for if this inanimate body is not happy, it is at least very tranquil! O, Catherine, would it not be better that I should lie down beside thee in this tomb, and let the vault be sealed up over our heads, and that we should thus sleep in each other's arms even till the day of the final awakening, than to intrust our lives again to the hazards of the world and the vicissitudes of fortune? For there is no certain future but that of the tomb, and why should we wait for this, when we can so easily go to meet it? (*Kissing her forehead.*) O, God! she moved, I think! My voice reached her soul, even in the depths of her slumber. Catherine! Catherine! come to thyself! Think no more of death! Life — life — with thee, happy or miserable, in joy or in despair! O, my God, send life! (*Turning towards the door of the tomb, which is opening.*) Unhappy chance! Who comes here? Imprudent wretch that I am, why did I not close this door behind the last person that went out? (*Going to the door, and then recoiling in fear.*) The king, — the king here! (*Returning to the tomb and bending over the body.*) Ye powers of darkness, let your iron slumber weigh heavily upon her eyes, and, rather than they should open now, let them never open again!" — Vol. II. p. 517.

The incident, on which the plot of "Charles the Seventh" turns, is far more natural and striking than the extravagances which we have just cited, and the play is executed with more finish and in better taste. It presents rather a vivid sketch of some peculiarities of the Feudal system, as exhibited in their influence on social life, and of the distracted state of France at the time when that system was rapidly crumbling to pieces, and the monarchy was gradually becoming consolidated in the hands of the king. It is hardly possible to give an idea of the piece in our limited space, as there is very little unity of action in it, notwithstanding the boast of the author in the preface, that in this instance he had rigidly observed the classical forms. The chief interest attends the developement of the character of Yaqoub, a young Arab, whom the Count de Savoisy had brought home on his return from a warlike expedition to the East, undertaken by command of the Pope, in order to expiate an involuntary sacrilege. To borrow the pedantic style, in which our author

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

speaks of his art, the several characters are presented rather as types of things, than as individuals. Yaqoub represents the slavery of the East, Raymond the servitude of the West, the Count himself pictures forth the Feudal system, and the monarchy, of course, appears in the person of the King. The moral idea, — for Dumas fancies that the play contains one, — is, that nature has organized every individual in harmony with the place where he was born, and where he ought to live and die. To transplant him is to do more or less violence to his original constitution. The principles of good, which, in his natural climate, and on his maternal earth, might ripen into fruit, are turned to evil on a foreign soil. As he cannot annihilate the air which offends his lungs, the sun which scorches him, or the earth which wounds his feet, his hatred turns upon men, on whom he can always wreak his vengeance.

This "moral idea" is rather a striking one; the only difficulty is, that it is not true, — that it is contradicted by history and daily experience. Man is neither a polar bear, that can live only on the ice, nor a palm tree, that will grow only within the tropics. Early habits may make a change of country irksome for a time, and to an ardent temperament the new locality may produce serious evil; and this fact is enough for our author's present purpose. But human nature is especially distinguished from that of the brutes by its great power of adaptation to the most dissimilar circumstances. Yaqoub is irritated by the insults to which he is exposed as a captive and an unbeliever, and not merely by the change of air and the novel circumstances with which he is surrounded. The higher part of his nature is called out as readily by the affection which he conceives for Bérengère, the noble lady of a Frank, as it would have been by a passion for a daughter of the desert. If he had visited the country as a conqueror, instead of a slave, he would have found the soil as genial and the new home as pleasant, as that of Spain appeared to his Arab ancestors, who wrested it from the Goths. The contrasts that are presented by the characters grouped around him, and the scenes in which they are called to act, certainly present a fine scope for the powers of the dramatist, and, though the execution falls short of the design, the whole play is one of the most pleasing and effective of our author's performances.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We have purposely selected for particular comment the least exceptionable of the dramas of Dumas, since a full notice of the others would only create weariness and disgust. In "Antony," "Richard Darlington," and "Angela," the incidents are even more glaringly improbable than any which we have noticed; the plot turns generally upon adultery, murder, or incest, and the personages are worthy of the atrocious sentiments which they are made to express. As the writer has shown himself capable of better things, as he does not appear, like some of his contemporaries, to be a sincere and devoted advocate of anti-social theories and licentious speculations, we must attribute these lamentable perversions of talent rather to the taste of the audiences for whom he labors, than to the natural obliquity of his own disposition. The latest of his writings for the stage, "Mademoiselle de Belle Isle," is one of his most ingenious and successful efforts; and, though marked with some of his characteristic faults, the plot is interesting, and it is carried out with much art and finish of execution. Those who have had the good fortune to witness its representation by such admirable performers as Lockroy, Firmin, and Mademoiselle Mars, though the last, at the full age of sixty-five, had the presumption to undertake the part of a girl of twenty, will not readily forget the impressive and delightful exhibition. The play continues a favorite on the Parisian stage, though she who contributed so largely to its first success, has at last heeded the whispers of her friends, and retired from the scene, of which, for nearly half a century, she was so distinguished an ornament.

Dumas having acquired his popularity chiefly as a playwright, we have considered his dramas at some length; and it is necessary to pass very quickly over his other writings. These are very miscellaneous in character, and certainly show a ready and versatile mind. The most considerable in dimensions and importance are the "Impressions of Travel," a medley of fancies, tales, and sketches, a large portion of which have but a slender connexion with a journey and residence of the author for a few months in Switzerland; and "Fifteen days at Sinai," a work which has rather better founded pretensions than the other to be called a book of travels, though it also contains much extraneous matter. The artifices of the bookmaker are very apparent in these

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

volumes, which are swelled to their present size for no other object that we can perceive, except to increase the profits of the author and publisher. Even as they are, from the liveliness of the style and the great variety of matter, they furnish very pleasant, though certainly very light reading. Dumas has a good deal of the talent so happily displayed by our own Willis and Stephens, in infusing spirit into the observations and sketches which are expected from the professed traveller, and in giving a lively narrative of personal adventure. The following is a translation of the Introduction to the book, which explains the motives of the expedition.

"Every traveller thinks he is bound to inform his readers of the motives of his journey. I have too much respect for my illustrious predecessors, from M. de Bougainville, who circumnavigated the globe, down to M. Le Maistre, who made a tour round his own chamber, not to follow their example. Besides, there will be found in my exposition, however short it may be, two very important things, which would be sought in vain elsewhere; — a receipt against the cholera, and a proof of the infallibility of the newspapers.

"On the fifteenth of April, 1832, as I was coming back from escorting to the staircase my excellent and celebrated friends, Litz and Boulanger, who had spent the evening with me in fortifying themselves against the prevailing scourge by taking strong black tea, I found that my legs suddenly failed me; at the same moment a dizziness obscured my sight, and a tremor passed over my body; I clung to a table to save myself from falling. I was attacked with the cholera.

"Whether it was Asiatic or European, epidemic or contagious, is a point of which I know nothing. But what I do know very well is that, five minutes afterwards, perceiving that I could hardly speak, I made haste to call for some sugar and ether. The domestic, who was a very intelligent girl, and who had sometimes seen me, after dinner, soak a bit of sugar in rum, supposed that I wanted something similar. She filled a glass with pure ether, placed upon its opening the largest piece of sugar she could find, and brought it to me when I had just gone to bed, shivering in all my limbs. As my consciousness began to leave me, I mechanically reached out my hand. I felt that they put something into it, and at the same time I heard somebody say, 'Swallow that, Sir; it will do you good.' I brought this something up to my mouth, and swallowed what it contained; that is to say, about half a flask of ether.

"What revolution took place when this diabolical liquor en-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tered my body, it is impossible for me to say, for almost immediately I lost all consciousness. An hour afterwards, I returned to myself and found that I was wrapped up in several folds of fur; a bottle of boiling water was at my feet; two persons, each holding a warming-pan full of coals, were rubbing me on every seam. For a moment I thought I was dead and in the infernal regions; the ether was burning my vitals within, the assistants were frying me brown without. At last, after a quarter of an hour more, the cold confessed itself vanquished; I was dissolving into water, and the doctor declared that I was cured. It was high time; two more turns of the spit, and I had been roasted.

"Four days afterwards, the director of the Porte-Saint-Martin came to take a seat at my bedside. The theatre was yet more sick than I, and the dying called to its aid the convalescent. M. Harel told me, that he required in a fortnight, at the utmost, a piece which should produce at least fifty thousand crowns; he added, in order to persuade me, that the feverish condition in which I was placed, was very favorable for a work of the imagination, on account of the excitement of the brain with which it was attended. This reasoning appeared to me so conclusive, that I immediately set myself to work. I gave him his piece at the end of a week, instead of a fortnight, and it produced a hundred thousand crowns, in lieu of fifty thousand. It was true, that I was very near becoming insane.

"This forced labor was of no benefit whatever to my health. Such was my weakness that I could hardly stand upright, when I heard of the death of General Lamarque. The next day I was appointed one of the committee of arrangements for the funeral; my duty was to cause the artillery of the national guard, to which I belonged, to take the place assigned to it in the procession by the military hierarchy.

"All Paris saw the funeral pomp pass by,—a sublime spectacle of order, sorrow, and patriotism. Who changed this order into confusion, this grief into anger, this patriotism into rebellion? I know not, nor do I wish to know, before the day when the dynasty of July, like that of Charles the Ninth, shall give up its accounts to God, or, like that of Louis the Sixteenth, shall settle its affairs with men.

"On the ninth of June, I read in a legitimist paper, that I had been taken with arms in my hand, at the affair in the cloister Saint-Méry, tried by a military tribunal in the course of the night, and shot at three o'clock in the morning. The news bore such an official character, the account of my execution, which I had met with great bravery, was given in such detail, the information came from so good a source, that for a moment I en-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tertained serious doubts about the matter. Besides, the writer was perfectly convinced that the account was true. For the first time he spoke well of me in his paper; it was very evident he thought I was dead.

"I threw off the coverlet, jumped down from the bed, and ran to the glass in order to obtain some proofs of my existence. At that moment, the door of the chamber opened and a messenger entered bringing a note from Charles Nodier, which was as follows.

"'My Dear Alexandre.

"'I have just read in the newspaper that you were shot yesterday at three o'clock in the morning. Be kind enough to let me know whether this will prevent you from coming to dine with me to-morrow at the Arsenal, along with Taylor.'

"I sent back word to Charles, that, as to the matter of being dead or alive, I could not speak with certainty, for my own opinion was not yet made up on that point; but, in either case, I should certainly come to dine with him on the morrow; so he had only to make himself ready, like Don Juan, to entertain the statue of the commander.

"The next day, it was finally decided that I was not dead. But this was not gaining much, for I was still very sick, and therefore the doctor ordered me, as a doctor always does, when he knows not what else to prescribe, to make a journey to Switzerland.

"Consequently on the twenty-first of July, 1832, I left Paris." — Vol. I. p. 165.

This extract affords one specimen of the manner in which Dumas alludes to topics of political interest. Frequent remarks of a similar character are scattered throughout his works, betraying rather the exasperation of personal feeling, and the desire of making pungent and exciting observations, calculated for the popular ear, than the sober and earnest convictions of a lover of freedom and truth. The spirit of the opposition to the present dynasty of France appears on this and other occasions rather violent and revengeful, than deliberative and profound; it betrays the bitterness of disappointment and even the desire of blood, but it does not seem to rest upon fixed principles, nor to point to any definite end. In a word, it shows the disposition of a people accustomed to revolutions suddenly brought about by violence and bloodshed, and not by a gradual change of opinion effected by the diffusion of knowledge, the study of political

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rights, and the general progress of civilization. In a historico-political work by Dumas, entitled "Gaul and France," which has been translated and published in this country, there are further manifestations of this state of political feeling, which we commend to the attention of the curious.

To return to the "Impressions of Travel," Dumas, after leaving Paris, makes his first halt at Montereau, about twenty leagues from the capital, where the sight of the bridge over the Seine reminds him of the two great events in the history of France, of which it was the theatre; the assassination of the Duke of Burgundy, by the Dauphin, in 1419, and the last great victory of Napoleon over the Allies in 1814. After his usual fashion, of swelling the size of his book by foreign matter, lugged in by the head and shoulders, he takes this occasion to narrate at length, in a strange mixture of truth and fable, the story of both events. In this way, the reader is perpetually reminded, that he is engaged with a travelling novelist and playwright, who is seeking everywhere for the materials of his art, and who sets down, as the fruit of a voyager's observations, what was in truth slowly concocted at home in his closet. Some of the historical reminiscences thus introduced, and dressed up in the usual manner of a writer of fiction, are told with great vivacity, and are very acceptable to most readers, though they make a rather disjointed book. They are more tolerable, at any rate, than the antiquarian discussions and other passages which show some pretensions to learning, and serve to fill up a given number of pages, though the facts and arguments seem to be derived from no higher source than encyclopædias and guide-books.

But there are other portions of the book, which afford far more entertaining matter. Dumas has an eye and a heart for the more striking aspects of outward nature; and though the wonders of Switzerland have already wellnigh exhausted the pen and the pencil of the tourist and the draughtsman, his descriptions are thrown off with such spirit and graphic power, that the reader willingly lingers over them, and even turns to them for a second time. Then the crowd of motley characters from all parts of the world, whom the attractions of this country bring together at its chief places of interest during the summer months, afford fine scope for his ready

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

talent in sketching portraits and caricatures. As he has no scruple in inventing scenes and incidents for showing off their peculiarities to the best advantage, he forms a very amusing gallery of grotesque and life-like personages. Something of national prejudice appears in his portraitures of the travelling English, who, it must be confessed, do not sustain a very high character in any part of the continent. Dumas sketches, with malicious fidelity, the stiffness of John Bull's manners, his helplessness in novel situations, and his ludicrous attempts at speaking any other than his vernacular tongue. The drawings of his own countrymen are more flattering, as might be expected, but they are equally well done. The carelessness and vivacity of the young Parisian, and the humors of that experienced voyager and amusing companion on the road for a single day, — the travelling bag-man, or commercial agent, — are shown up with great effect. A scene on the top of the Righi between one of these people and an Englishman is described with much comic power, though it is absurdly made to terminate in a duel of so tragic a cast, as to remind one of the dramatist's study of horrible *dénouemens*.

The stories and traditions of the peasantry, especially those relating to the heroic days of Switzerland, are picked up by our traveller, and related, with the usual admixture of fiction, in a very agreeable way. We have room only for one extract more, and that shall be a part of the account of the first ascension of Mont Blanc, which Dumas pretends to have taken down from the lips of Jacques Balmat himself, the hero of the story, who was alive in 1832, at the age of about seventy. He accomplished his great feat in 1786. M. de Saussure had promised a considerable reward to the first who should reach the summit, and, thus stimulated, Balmat, an active and hardy peasant, having explored the way alone, for about two thirds of the distance, in two previous trials, determined to make his great effort in company with Dr. Paccard, of Geneva.

"All our little affairs being arranged, we took leave of our wives, and set out about five o'clock in the afternoon, one of us taking the right bank of the river Arve, and the other the left, in order that no one might suspect the end which we had in view. We came together again at the village of Côte, and, having attained an elevated point between the glacier of Bossons and that

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of Taconnay, resolved to pass the night there. I had brought with me a blanket, in which I rolled up the Doctor like an infant in swaddling clothes, and, thanks to this precaution, he passed a good night. For my own part, I slept soundly till about half past one. At two o'clock, the white line appeared in the horizon, and the sun soon rose, without mist, clear and bright, promising a famous day. I awakened the Doctor, and we began our journey. In a quarter of an hour, we were engaged in crossing the glacier of Taconnay. The first steps of the Doctor upon this great sea, among the yawning crevices, to the bottom of which the eye could not reach, over the bridges of ice which one hears cracking under his feet, and is certain of instant death if they break, were rather wavering. But he gained courage by degrees, as he saw me advance, and we got over it safe and sound. We then began to ascend the Grands-Mulets, and soon left it behind us. I pointed out to the Doctor the place where I had passed the first night. He made up a very meaning face, and remained silent for ten minutes; then, suddenly stopping, he exclaimed, 'Balmat, do you think we shall reach the top of Mont Blanc to-day?' I perceived where the shoe pinched, and reassured him by a laugh, though without promising any thing. We kept on ascending for two hours; the wind had risen since we left the *plateau*, and was now becoming more and more troublesome. At last, when we reached the peak of rock, called the Petit-Mulet, a violent gust carried off the Doctor's hat. At the round oath which he uttered, I stopped and perceived his beaver sailing away towards Carmayer. He was looking after it with outstretched arms. 'O! you must bid it adieu, Doctor,' I exclaimed, 'for it is on the way to Piedmont. A good journey to it!' It seemed that the wind had taken a fancy for joking, for I had hardly closed my mouth when there came such a furious gust, that we were obliged to lie down on the ground, to avoid being carried after the hat. For ten minutes we were not able to rise; the wind lashed the mountain, and whistled over our heads, bearing clouds of snow as large as a house. The Doctor was disheartened. For myself, I thought only of the saleswoman, who at this time had agreed to look up to the *dome Gouter;* and therefore, the moment that the wind lulled, I stood up; but the Doctor would only consent to follow me on all fours. We thus arrived at a point whence the village could be seen. There I drew out my pocket glass, and in the valley, twelve thousand feet below us, I perceived our gossip, together with a crowd of fifty people, eagerly gazing upwards. A consideration of self-love prompted the Doctor to get upon his legs again; and, as soon

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as he rose, I perceived that we were recognised, — he by his great surtout, and I by my ordinary dress. The people in the valley waved their hats to us, and I answered with mine. That of the Doctor was absent on a long furlough.

"But Paccard had exhausted all his energies in getting upon his feet, and no encouragement could induce him to continue the ascent. After I had used all my eloquence, and saw that it was only losing time, I told him to continue moving about, and to keep himself as warm as possible. He answered, 'Yes! yes!' mechanically, only to get rid of me. I then left the bottle with him, and set off alone, saying that I would return for him.

"After this, the route did not offer any great difficulty, but, in proportion as I ascended, the air became less fit for respiration. Every ten steps I was obliged to stop, as if afflicted with the asthma. It seemed as if I had no lungs, and that my chest was empty. I then folded up my handkerchief like a cravat, tied it over my mouth, and breathed through it, which eased me a little. Still the cold increased, and I was an hour in advancing half a mile. I walked with my head bent down, and seeing that I had reached a new point, I raised my head, and perceived that I was at last on the summit of Mont Blanc.

"Then I cast my eyes around, trembling lest I should be deceived, and should find some other peak, which I should not have the strength to ascend; for the joints of my legs seemed to hold together only by means of my trowsers. But no, no. I was at the end of my journey. I had reached a spot that no one had occupied before me, not even the eagle or the chamois. I had come alone, without other aid than that of my strength and will. All that surrounded me seemed to be my property. I was king of Mont Blanc, I was the statue of this immense pedestal.

"Then I turned towards Chamouny, waving my hat on the end of my stick, and saw, by the aid of my glass, that they answered my signs. The whole village had turned out. The first moment of exultation having passed, I began to think of the poor Doctor. I descended as rapidly as I could, calling out his name, and was frightened to find that he did not answer. At last, I perceived him, with his head between his knees, bent up like a cat asleep before the fire. I struck him on the shoulder, and he mechanically raised his head. I told him that I had reached the top of Mont Blanc. The news did not seem very interesting, for he replied by asking me, where he could lie down and go to sleep. I then told him that he had come thither in order to reach the summit, and that he *should* go there. I shook him, raised him up, and made him take a few steps. He appeared stupefied, and it seemed to be indifferent to him whether he went one way or an-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

other, — whether he ascended or descended. But when the movements which I forced him to make brought back a little the circulation of the blood, he asked me if I had not another pair of gloves, like those which were on my hands. They were mittens of rabbit fur, which I had caused to be made expressly for the excursion. Under the circumstances, I would have refused both of them to my own brother; but I gave him one.

"A little after six o'clock, we both stood upon the summit, and although the sun shone brightly, the sky appeared darkly blue, and a few stars were visible. When we turned our eyes downwards, we saw nothing but ice, snow, rocks, and rugged peaks. The immense chain of mountains that runs through Dauphiny, and extends as far as the Tyrol, spread out before us its four hundred glaciers glowing with light. The lakes of Geneva and Neufchâtel seemed like blue points, and were hardly perceptible. On our left lay mountainous Switzerland, piled together in heaps, and beyond it the level country appeared like a rich carpet. On our right was all Piedmont and Lombardy, as far as Genoa. In front, was Italy. Paccard saw nothing; I told him all. For myself, I no longer suffered, I was no more fatigued. I hardly perceived the difficulty of breathing, which a short time before had nearly caused me to renounce the undertaking. We remained there thirty-three minutes.

"It was now seven o'clock, and but two hours and a half of daylight remained. It was high time to commence the descent. I waved my hat again as a final signal to those in the valley, and we began to descend. There was no path for our guidance, and we found our way only by the little holes in the ice made by our iron-shod staves. Paccard was like a child, without energy or will, whom I guided when the route was good, and carried in my arms when it was bad. At eleven o'clock we had left behind us the region of ice, and placed our feet upon firm ground. Then I permitted the Doctor to stop, and prepared to wrap him up again in the blanket. Having done this, I laid him down under shelter of a rock, and, having eaten and drank a little, we crept as close as possible to each other, and went to sleep." — Vol. I. p. 213.

The next morning they resumed their descent, and arrived in safety at the village, though the Doctor had become totally blind, and remained so for several days; and even the vigorous Balmat did not recover for some time from the effects of the excursion. De Saussure ascended the next year, guided by this intrepid pioneer, and, between that time and 1832, ten other parties accomplished the same feat.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Among the names we find those of two Americans, Dr. Rensselaer and Mr. Howard, who ascended in 1819.

We have as yet said nothing of the novels of Dumas, which form rather the most bulky portion of his works. There is less need of noticing them at length, as they evince less talent than his other productions, though they are equally characteristic of his school, and as some of them have been translated and published in this country. One of them, "Pauline," appeared recently from the American press. It is a strange tale, in which horrible incidents are accumulated, too improbable to create any illusion, and without sufficient force of coloring or style to become interesting as a work of art. "Isabel of Bavaria" and some others are historical romances, the story following at times very closely the course of real events, and not embellished with sufficient copiousness of invention or descriptive power to correspond with the dignity of the characters or the richness of the materials. It would be idle to compare them with the magic creations of Scott, as they are much inferior to works of the same class by the writer's countrymen. They belong to the mass of indifferent fictions, which the press of France, England, and America is now sending forth in vast profusion, adapted for a great multitude of uninstructed readers, who seem to find nothing better than the perusal of such trash for the amusement of their leisure hours.

ART. VI. — *Life in Mexico during a Residence of Two Years in that Country.* By Madame C— DE LA B—. Boston: Little & Brown. Two Volumes. 12mo.

IN the present age of high literary activity, travellers make not the least importunate demands on public attention, and their lucubrations, under whatever name, — Rambles, Notices, Incidents, Pencillings, — are nearly as important a staple for the "trade," as novels and romances. A book of travels, formerly, was a very serious affair. The traveller set out on his distant journey with many a solemn preparation, made his will, and bade adieu to his friends, like one who might not again return. If he did return, the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

results were embodied in a respectable folio, or at least quarto, well garnished with cuts, and done up in a solid form, which argued that it was no fugitive publication, but destined for posterity.

All this is changed. The voyager now-a-days leaves home with as little ceremony and leave-taking, as if it were for a morning's drive. He steps into the bark that is to carry him across thousands of miles of ocean, with the moral certainty of returning in a fixed week, almost at a particular day. Parties of gentlemen and ladies go whizzing along in their steam-ships over the route, which cost so many weary days to the Argonauts of old, and run over the choicest scenes of classic antiquity, scattered through Europe, Asia, and Africa, in less time than it formerly took to go from one end of the British isles to the other. The Cape of Good Hope, so long the great stumblingblock to the navigators of Europe, is doubled, or the Red Sea coasted, in the same way by the fashionable tourist, who glides along the shores of Arabia, Persia, Afghanistan, Bombay, and Hindostan, further than the furthest limits of Alexander's conquests, — before the last leaves of the last new novel which he has taken by the way are fairly cut. The facilities of communication have, in fact, so abridged distances, that geography, as we have hitherto studied it, may be said to be entirely reformed. Instead of leagues, we now compute by hours, and we find ourselves next door neighbours to those whom we had looked upon as antipodes.

The consequence of these improvements in the means of intercourse is, that all the world goes abroad; or, at least, one half is turned upon the other. Nations are so mixed up by this process that they are in some danger of losing their idiosyncrasy; and the Egyptian and the Turk, though they still cling to their religion, are becoming European in their notions and habits more and more every day.

The taste for pilgrimage, however, it must be owned, does not stop with the countries, where it can be carried on with such increased facility. It has begotten a nobler spirit of adventure, something akin to what existed in the fifteenth century, when the world was new, or newly discovering, and a navigator, who did not take in sail, like the cautious seamen of Knickerbocker, might run down some strange continent in the dark. For, in these times of dandy tourists

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and travel-mongers, the boldest achievements, that have hitherto defied the most adventurous spirits, have been performed ; the Himmaleh mountains have been scaled, the Niger ascended, the burning heart of Africa penetrated, the icy Arctic and Antarctic explored, and the mysterious monuments of the semi-civilized races of Central America have been thrown open to the public gaze. It is certain that this is a high-pressure age, and every department of science and letters, physical and mental, feels its stimulating influence.

No nation on the whole has contributed so largely to these itinerant expeditions as the English. Uneasy, it would seem, at being cooped up in their little isle, they sally forth in all directions, swarming over the more cultivated and luxurious countries of the neighbouring continent, and sending out stragglers on other more distant and formidable missions. Whether it be that their soaring spirits are impatient of the narrow quarters which nature has assigned them ; or that there exists a supernumerary class of idlers, who, wearied out with the monotony of home, and the same dull round of dissipation, seek excitement in strange scenes and adventures ; or whether they go abroad for the sunshine, of which they have heard so much, but seen so little, — whatever be the cause, they furnish a far greater number of tourists than all the world beside. We Americans, indeed, may compete with them in mere locomotion ; for our familiarity with magnificent distances at home, makes us still more indifferent to them abroad. But this locomotion is generally in the way of business, and the result is rarely shown in a book, — unless, indeed, it be the leger.

Yet John Bull is on many accounts less fitted than most of his neighbours for the duties of a traveller. However warm and hospitable in his own home, he has a cold reserve in his exterior, a certain chilling atmosphere, which he carries along with him, that freezes up the sympathies of strangers ; and which is only to be completely thawed by long and intimate acquaintance. But the traveller has no time for intimate acquaintances. He must " go ahead," and trust to his first impressions, — for they will also be his last. Unluckily it rarely falls out that the first impressions of honest John are very favorable. There is too much pride, not to say *hauteur* in his composition, which, with the best intentions in the world, will show itself in a way not particularly

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

flattering to those who come in contact with him. He goes through a strange nation, treading on all their little irritable prejudices, shocking their self-love and harmless vanities, in short, going against the grain, and roughing up every thing by taking it the wrong way. Thus he draws out the bad humors of the people among whom he moves, sees them in their most unamiable and by no means natural, aspect, — in short, looks on the wrong side of the tapestry. What wonder if his notions are somewhat awry as to what he sees! There are, it is true, distinguished exceptions to all this; English travellers, who cover the warm heart, — as warm as it is generally true and manly, — under a kind and sometimes cordial manner. But they are the exceptions. The Englishman undoubtedly appears best on his own soil, where his national predilections and prejudices, or at least the intimation of them, are somewhat mitigated in deference to his guest.

Another source of the disqualification of John Bull for being a calm and philosophic traveller, is the manner in which he has been educated at home; the soft luxuries by which he has been surrounded from his cradle, until luxuries have become necessaries, — and accustomed to perceive all the machinery of life glide along as noiselessly and as swiftly as the foot of Time itself, he becomes morbidly sensitive to every temporary jar or derangement in the working of it. In no country since the world was made, have all the appliances for mere physical, and we may add intellectual indulgence, been carried to such perfection, as in this little island nucleus of civilization. Nowhere can a man get such returns for his outlay. The whole organization of society is arranged so as to minister to the comforts of the wealthy; and an Englishman, with the golden talisman in his pocket, can bring about him genii to do his bidding, and transport himself over distances with a thought, almost as easily as if he were the possessor of Aladin's magic lamp, and the fairy carpet of the Arabian Tales.

When he journeys over his little island, his comforts and luxuries cling as close to him as round his own fireside. He rolls along roads as smooth and well-beaten as those in his own park; is swept onward by sleek and well-groomed horses, in a carriage as soft and elastic, and quite as showy as his own equipage; puts up at inns, that may vie with his

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

own castle in all their comforts and accommodations, and is received by crowds of obsequious servants, more solicitous, probably, even than his own to win his golden smiles. In short, wherever he goes, he may be said to carry along with him his castle, park, equipage, establishment. The whole are in movement together. He changes place, indeed, but changes nothing else; for travelling, as it occurs in other lands, hard roads, harder beds, and hardest fare,— he knows no more of it, than if he had been passing from one wing of his castle to the other.

All this, it must be admitted, is rather an indifferent preparation for a tour on the Continent. Of what avail is it, that Paris is the most elegant capital, France the most enlightened country, on the European *terra-firma*, if one cannot walk out in the streets without the risk of being run over for want of a *trottoire*, nor move on the roads without being half smothered in a lumbering vehicle, dragged by ropes, at the rate of five miles an hour? Of what account are all the fine music and paintings, the architecture and art of Italy, when one must shiver by day from want of carpets and sea-coal fires, and be thrown into a fever at night by the active vexations of a still more tormenting kind? The galled equestrian might as well be expected to feel nothing but raptures and ravishment at the fine scenery through which he is riding. It is probable he will think much more of his own petty hurts than of the beauties of nature. A travelling John Bull, if his skin is not off, is at least so thin-skinned, that it is next door to being so.

If the European neighbourhood affords so many means of annoyance to the British traveller, they are incalculably multiplied on this side of the water, and that, too, under circumstances which dispose him still less to charity in his criticisms and constructions. On the Continent he feels he is among strange races, born and bred under different religious and political institutions, and, above all, speaking different languages. He does not necessarily, therefore, measure them by his peculiar standard, but allows them one of their own. The dissimilarity is so great, in all the main features of national polity and society, that it is hard to institute a comparison. Whatever be his contempt for the want of progress and perfection in the science of living, he comes to regard them as a distinct race, amenable to different laws, and therefore

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

licensed to indulge in different usages, to a certain extent, from his own. If a man travels in China, he makes up his mind to chop-sticks. If he should go to the Moon, he would not be scandalized by seeing people walk with their heads under their arms. He has embarked on a different planet. It is only in things, which run parallel to those in his own country, that a comparison can be instituted, and charity too often fails, where criticism begins.

Unhappily, in America, the Englishman finds these points of comparison forced on him at every step. He lands among a people speaking the same language, professing the same religion, drinking at the same fountains of literature, trained in the same occupations of active life. The towns are built on much the same model with those in his own land. The brick houses, the streets, the "side-walks," the in-door arrangements, all, in short, are near enough on the same pattern to provoke a comparison. Alas! for the comparison. The cities sink, at once, into mere provincial towns, the language degenerates into a provincial *patois*, the manners, the fashions, down to the cut of the clothes, and the equipages, all are provincial. The people, the whole nation, — as independent as any, certainly, if not, as our orators fondly descant, the best and most enlightened upon earth, — dwindle into a mere British colony. The traveller does not seem to understand that he is treading the soil of the New World, where every thing is new, where antiquity dates but from yesterday, where the present and the future are all and the past nothing, where hope is the watch-word, and "Go ahead!" the principle of action. He does not comprehend, that when he sets foot on such a land, he is no longer to look for old hereditary landmarks, old time-honored monuments and institutions, old families, that have vegetated on the same soil since the Conquest. He must be content to part with the order and something of the decorum incident to an old community, where the ranks are all precisely and punctually defined, where the power is deposited by prescriptive right in certain privileged hands, and where the great mass have the careful obsequiousness of dependents, looking for the crumbs that fall.

He is now among a new people; where every thing is in movement, all struggling to get forward, and where, though many go adrift in their wild spirit of adventure, and a tempo-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rary check may be sometimes felt by all, the great mass still advances. He is landed on a hemisphere, where fortunes are to be made, and men are employed in getting, not in spending, — a difference which explains so many of the discrepancies between the structure of our own society and habits, and those of the old world. To know how to spend, is itself a science ; and the science of spending and that of getting are rarely held by the same hand.

In such a state of things, the whole arrangement of society, notwithstanding the apparent resemblance to that in his own country, and its real resemblance in minor points, is reversed. The rich proprietor, who does nothing but fatten on his rents, is no longer at the head of the scale, as in the Old World. The man of enterprise takes the lead in a bustling community, where action and progress, or at least change, are the very conditions of existence. The upper classes, — if the term can be used in a complete democracy, — have not the luxurious finish and accommodations, to be found in the other hemisphere. The humbler classes have not the poverty-stricken, cringing spirit of hopeless inferiority. The pillar of society, if it want the Corinthian capital, wants also the heavy and superfluous base. Every man, not only professes to be, but is practically on a footing of equality with his neighbour. The traveller must not expect to meet here the deference, or even the courtesies, which grow out of distinction of castes. This is an awkward dilemma for one, whose nerves have never been jarred by contact with the great *profane ;* who has never been tossed about in the rough and tumble of humanity. It is little to him, that the poorest child in the community learns how to read and write ; that the poorest man can have, — what Henry the Fourth so good-naturedly wished for the humblest of his subjects, — a fowl in his pot, every day for his dinner ; that no one is so low, but that he may aspire to all the rights of his fellow-men, and find an open theatre, on which to display his own peculiar talents.

As the tourist strikes into the interior, difficulties of all sorts multiply, incident to a raw and unformed country. The comparison with the high civilization at home becomes more and more unfavorable, as he is made to feel that in this land of promise, it must be long before promise can become the performance of the Old World. And yet, if he would look

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

beyond the surface, he would see that much here too has been performed, however much may be wanting. He would see lands over which the wild Indian roamed as a hunting-ground, teeming with harvests for the consumption of millions here and across the water; forests, which have shot up, ripened, and decayed on the same spot ever since the creation, now swept away to make room for towns and villages, thronged with an industrious population; rivers, which rolled on in their solitudes, undisturbed except by the wandering bark of the savage, now broken and dimpled by hundreds of steamboats, freighted with the rich tribute of the country thus rescued from the wilderness. He would not expect to meet the careful courtesies of polished society in the pioneers of civilization, whose mission, to use the cant word of the day, has been, to recover the great continent from the bear and the buffalo. He would have some charity for their ignorance of the latest fashions of Bond Street; and their departure, sometimes, even from what, in the old country, is considered as the decorum, and it may be decencies, of life. But not so; his heart turns back to his own land, and closes against the rude scenes around him. For he finds here none of the soft graces of cultivation, or the hallowed memorials of an early civilization; no gray, weather-beaten cathedrals, telling of the Normans; no Gothic churches, in their groves of venerable oaks; no moss-covered cemeteries, in which the dust of his fathers has been gathered since the time of the Plantagenets; no rural cottages, half smothered with roses and honey-suckles, intimating that even in the most humble abodes the taste for the beautiful has found its way; no trim gardens, and fields blossoming with hawthorn hedges and miniature culture; no ring fences, inclosing well-shaven lawns, woods so disposed as to form a picture of themselves, bright threads of silvery water, and sparkling fountains. All these are wanting, and his eyes turn with disgust from the wild and rugged features of nature, and all her rough accompaniments, — from man almost as wild; and his heart sickens as he thinks of his own land, and all its scenes of beauty. He thinks not of the poor, who leave that land for want of bread, and find in this a kindly welcome, and the means of independence and advancement, which their own denies them.

He goes on, if he be a splenetic Sinbad, discharging his

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sour bile on everybody that he comes in contact with, thus producing an amiable ripple in the current as he proceeds, that adds marvellously, no doubt, to his own quiet and personal comfort. If he have a true merry vein and hearty good-nature, he gets on, laughing sometimes in his sleeve at others, and cracking his jokes on the unlucky fate of Brother Jonathan, who, if he is not very silly, — which he very often is, — laughs too, and joins in the jest, though it may be somewhat at his own expense. It matters little whether the tourist be Whig or Tory in his own land ; if the latter, he returns, probably, ten times the conservative that he was when he left it. If Whig, or even Radical, it matters not ; his loyalty waxes warmer and warmer with every step of his progress among the republicans ; and he finds, that practical democracy, shouldering and elbowing its neighbours, as it "goes ahead," is no more like the democracy, which he has been accustomed to admire in theory, than the real machinery, with its smell, smoke, and clatter, under full operation, is like the pretty toy, which he sees as a model in the Patent-Office at Washington.

On the whole, there seems to be no people better constituted for travellers, at least for recording their travelling experiences, than the French. There is a mixture of frivolity and philosophy in their composition, which is admirably suited to the exigencies of their situation. They mingle readily with all classes and races, discarding for the time their own nationality, — at least their national antipathies. Their pleasant vanity fills them with the desire of pleasing others, which most kindly reacts by their being themselves pleased ;

"Pleased with himself, whom all the world can please."

The Frenchman can even so far accommodate himself to habits alien to his own, that he can tolerate those of the savages themselves, and enter into a sort of fellowship with them, without either party altogether discarding his national tastes and propensities. It is Chateaubriand, if we are not mistaken, who relates, that, wandering in the solitudes of the American wilderness, his ears were most unexpectedly saluted by the sounds of a violin. He had little doubt that one of his own countrymen must be at hand ; and in a wretched enclosure, he found one of them, sure enough, teaching *Messieurs les*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sauvages to dance. It is certain, that this spirit of accommodation to the wild habits of their copper-colored friends gave the French traders and missionaries, formerly, an ascendency over the Aborigines, which was never obtained by any other of the white men.

The most comprehensive and truly philosophic work on the genius and institutions of this country, the best exposition of its social phenomena, its present condition, and probable future, are to be found in the pages of a Frenchman. It is in the French language, too, that by far the greatest work has been produced on the great Southern portion of our continent, once comprehended under New Spain.

To write a book of travels seems to most people to require as little preliminary preparation as to write a letter. One has only to jump into a coach, embark on board a steamboat, minute down his flying experiences and hair-breadth escapes, the aspect of the country as seen from the interior of a crowded diligence, or a vanishing rail-car, note the charges of the landlords and the quality of the fare, a dinner or two at the minister's, the last new play or opera at the theatre, and the affair is done. It is very easy to do this, certainly; very easy to make a bad book of travels, — but by no means easy to make a good one. This requires as many and various qualifications as to make any other good book; qualifications which must vary with the character of the country one is to visit. Thus, for instance, it requires a very different preparation and stock of accomplishments to make the tour of Italy, its studios and its galleries of art, or of Egypt with its immortal pyramids and mighty relics of a primeval age, the great cemetery of antiquity, — from what it does to travel understandingly in our own land, a new creation, as it were, without monuments, without arts, where the only study of the traveller, — the noblest of all studies, it is true, — is man. The inattention to this difference of preparation, demanded by different places, has led many a clever writer to make a very worthless book, which would have been remedied had he consulted his own qualifications, instead of taking the casual direction of the first steamboat or mail-coach that lay in his way.

There is no country more difficult to discuss in all its multiform aspects, than Mexico, or rather the wide region, once comprehended under the name of New Spain. Its various

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

climates, bringing to perfection the vegetable products of the most distant latitudes ; its astonishing fruitfulness in its lower regions, and its curse of barrenness over many a broad acre of its plateau ; its inexhaustible mines, that have flooded the Old World with an ocean of silver, such as Columbus in his wildest visions never dreamed of, — and unhappily, by a hard mischance, never lived to realize himself ; its picturesque landscape, where the volcanic fire gleams amid wastes of eternal snow, and a few hours carry the traveller from the hot regions of the lemon and the cocoa to the wintry solitudes of the mountain fir ; its motley population made up of Indians, old Spaniards, modern Mexicans, meztizoes, mulattoes, and zambos ; its cities built in the clouds ; its lakes of salt water, hundreds of miles from the ocean ; its people with their wild and picturesque costume, in keeping, as we may say, with its extraordinary scenery ; its stately palaces, half furnished, where services of gold and silver plate load the tables in rooms without a carpet, while the red dust of the bricks soils the diamond-sprinkled robes of the dancer ; the costly attire of its higher classes, blazing with pearls and jewels ; the tawdry magnificence of its equipages, saddles inlaid with gold, bits and stirrups of massy silver, all executed in the clumsiest style of workmanship ; its lower classes, — the men with their jackets, glittering with silver buttons, and rolls of silver tinsel round their caps, the women with petticoats fringed with lace, and white satin shoes on feet unprotected by a stocking ; its high-born fair ones crowding to the cockpit, and solacing themselves with the fumes of a cigar ; its churches and convents, in which all the sombre rules of monastic life are maintained in their primitive rigor, while they have died away before the liberal spirit of the age on the other side of the water ; its swarms of *léperos*, the lazzaroni of the land ; its hordes of almost legalized banditti, who stalk openly in the streets, and render the presence of an armed escort necessary to secure a safe drive into the environs of the capital ; its whole structure of society, in which a republican form is thrown over institutions as aristocratic, and castes as nicely defined, as in any monarchy of Europe ; in short, its marvellous inconsistencies and contrasts in climate, character of the people, and face of the land, — so marvellous, as, we trust, to excuse the unprecedented length of this sentence, — undoubtedly make modern Mexico one

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the most prolific, original, and difficult themes for the study of the traveller.

Yet this great theme has found in Humboldt a writer of strength, sufficient to grapple with it in nearly all its relations. While yet a young man, or, at least, while his physical as well as mental energies were in their meridian, he came over to this country, with an enthusiasm for science, which was only heightened by obstacles, and with stores of it already accumulated, that enabled him to detect the nature of every new object that came under his eye, and arrange it in its proper class. With his scientific instruments in his hand, he might be seen scaling the snow-covered peaks of the Cordilleras, or diving into their unfathomable caverns of silver; now wandering through their dark forests in search of new specimens for his herbarium, — now coasting the stormy shores of the Gulf, and penetrating its unhealthy streams, jotting down every landmark that might serve to guide the future navigator, or surveying the crested Isthmus in search of a practicable communication between the great seas on its borders, — and then again patiently studying the monuments and manuscripts of the Aztecs in the capital, or mingling with the wealth and fashion in its saloons, — frequenting every place, in short, and everywhere at home;

"Grammaticus, rhetor, geometres, ... omnia novit."

The whole range of these various topics is brought under review in his pages, and on all he sheds a ray, sometimes a flood, of light. His rational philosophy, content rather to doubt than to decide, points out the track, which other adventurous spirits may follow up with advantage. No antiquary has done so much towards determining the original hives of the semi-civilized races of the Mexican plateau. No one, not even of the Spaniards, has brought together such an important mass of information in respect to the resources, natural products, and statistics, generally, of New Spain. His explorations have identified more than one locality, and illustrated more than one curious monument, of the people of Anahuac, which had baffled the inquiries of native antiquaries; and his work, while embodying the results of profound scholarship and art, is, at the same time, in many respects, the very best *manuel du voyageur*, and, as such, has been most freely used by subsequent tourists. It is true,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his pages are sometimes disfigured by pedantry, ambitious display, learned obscurity, and other affectations of the man of letters. But what human work is without its blemishes? His various writings on the subject of New Spain, taken collectively, are one of those monuments, which may be selected to show the progress of the species. Their author reminds us of one of the ancient athletæ, who descended into the arena to hurl the discus with a giant arm, that distanced every cast of his contemporaries!

There is one branch of his fruitful subject, which M. de Humboldt has not exhausted, and, indeed, has but briefly touched on. This is the social condition of the country, especially as found in its picturesque capital. This has been discussed by subsequent travellers more fully, and Ward, Bullock, Lyons, Poinsett, Tudor, Latrobe, have all produced works, which have for their object, more or less, the social habits and manners of the people. With most of them this is not the prominent object; and others of them, probably, have found obstacles in effecting it, to any great extent, from an imperfect knowledge of the language, —the golden key to the sympathies of a people; without which a traveller is as much at fault, as a man without an eye for color in a picture-gallery, or an ear for music at a concert. He may see and hear, indeed, in both, but *cui bono?* The traveller, ignorant of the language of the nation whom he visits, may descant on the scenery, the roads, the architecture, the outside of things, the rates and distances of posting, the dress of the people in the streets, and may possibly meet a native or two, half denaturalized, kept to dine with strangers at his banker's. But, as to the interior mechanism of society, its secret sympathies, and familiar tone of thinking and feeling, he can know no more, than he could of the contents of a library, by running over the titles of strange and unknown authors packed together on the shelves.

It was to supply this deficiency, that the work before us, no doubt, was given to the public, and it was composed under circumstances, that afforded every possible advantage and facility to its author. Although the initials only of the name are given in the title-page, yet, from these and certain less equivocal passages in the body of the work, it requires no Œdipus to divine, that the author is the wife of the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Chevalier Calderon de la Barca, well known in this country during his long residence, as Spanish minister, at Washington, where his amiable manners and high personal qualities secured him general respect, and the regard of all who knew him. On the recognition of the independence of Mexico by the mother country, Señor de Calderon was selected to fill the office of the first Spanish envoy to the Republic. It was a delicate mission after so long an estrangement, and it was hailed by the Mexicans with every demonstration of pride and satisfaction. Though twenty years had elapsed since they had established their independence, yet they felt as a wayward son may feel, who, having absconded from the paternal roof, and set up for himself, still looks back to it with a sort of reverence, and, in the plenitude of his prosperity, still feels the want of the parental benediction. We, who cast off our allegiance in a similar way, can comprehend the feeling. The new minister, from the moment of his setting foot on the Mexican shore, was greeted with an enthusiasm, which attested the popular feeling; and his presence in the capital was celebrated by theatrical exhibitions, bull-fights, illuminations, *fêtes* public and private, and every possible demonstration of respect for the new envoy and the country who sent him. His position secured him access to every place of interest to an intelligent stranger, and introduced him into the most intimate recesses of society, from which the stranger is commonly excluded, and to which, indeed, none but a Spaniard could, under any circumstances, have been admitted. Fortunately the minister possessed, in the person of his accomplished wife, one, who had both the leisure and the talent to profit by these uncommon opportunities; and the result is given in the work before us, consisting of letters to her family, which, it seems, since her return to the United States, have been gathered together, and prepared for publication.

On the 29th of October, 1839, Madame de Calderon embarked with her husband in a vessel for Havana, on her way to Mexico. The voyage was checkered by no remarkable incidents or perilous adventures. On entering the West Indian seas, the thoughts of the voyager naturally turned to the great navigator, whose sails were first spread on their bosom.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"It is well to read the History of Columbus at sea, but especially in these waters, where he wandered in suspense, high-wrought expectation, and firm faith; and to watch the signs which the noble mariner observed in these latitudes; the soft serenity of the breezes, the clear blue of the heavens, the brilliancy and number of the stars, the sea-weeds of the gulf, which always drift in the direction of the wind, the little land-birds, that come like harbingers of good tidings, the frequency of the shooting stars, and the multitude of flying-fish.

"As the shades of evening close around, and the tropical sky glitters with the light of innumerable stars, imagination transports us back to that century, which stands out in bold relief amidst other ages rolling by comparatively undistinguished, and we see, as in a vision, the Discoverer of a World, standing on the deck of his caravel, as it bounded over the unknown and mysterious waste of waters, his vigilant eyes fixed on the west, like a Persian intently watching the rising of his god; though his star was to arise from whence the day-god sets. We see him bending his gaze on the first dark line, that separated the watery sea from the blue of the heavens, striving to penetrate the gloom of night, yet waiting with patient faith until the dawn of day should bring the long wished-for shores in sight." — Vol. I. p. 6.

Preparations had been made for their reception by the authorities of Havana, where Señor de Calderon was to remain until a government vessel could be got ready to transport him to Mexico. Cuba has been visited by so many thousands of Americans, that one might imagine nothing new could be told us of it. But our countrymen go there mostly for business or health, rarely acquainted with the language, and see little or nothing of the higher society of the island. We have room only for one extract from the description of this, which shows, that the aristocracy of Cuba emulate that of the mother country in the splendor of their way of living.

"I can speak with more decision on the subject of a great ball given us by the Countess F——a, last evening, which was really superb. The whole house was thrown open, — there was a splendid supper, quantities of refreshments, and the whole select aristocracy of Havana. Diamonds on all the women, jewels and orders on all the men, magnificent lustres and mirrors, and a capital band of music in the gallery.

"The Captain-General was the only individual in a plain

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dress. He made himself very agreeable, in good French. About one hundred couple stood up in each country dance, but the rooms are so large and so judiciously lighted, that we did not feel at all warm. Waltzes, quadrilles, and these long Spanish dances succeeded each other. Almost all the girls have fine eyes and beautiful figures, but without color or much animation. The finest diamonds were those of the Countess F——a, particularly her necklace, which was *undeniable*.

"Walking through the rooms after supper, we were amused to see the negroes and negresses helping themselves plentifully to the sweetmeats, uncorking and drinking fresh bottles of Champagne, and devouring everything on the supper-tables, without the slightest concern for the presence either of their master or mistress; in fact, behaving like a multitude of spoiled children, who are sure of meeting with indulgence, and presume upon it. . . . . .

"Towards morning we were led down stairs to a large suite of rooms, containing a library of several thousand volumes, where coffee, cakes, &c., were prepared in very beautiful Sèvres porcelain and gold plate. We left the house, at last, to the music of the national hymn of Spain, which struck up as we passed through the gallery." — Vol. I. pp. 24, 25.

After passing a fortnight amidst the elegant hospitality of Havana, our travellers embarked in a Spanish vessel of war of twenty-five guns, manned by a crew of one hundred and fifty men. In a few days they made the coast of New Spain. But the voyager to that country must take his choice of the *vomito*, or yellow fever, in the hot months, or of the *norte*, the north wind, which sweeps over these latitudes in the autumnal and winter seasons. Our voyagers chose the latter, and got the full benefit of it. For several days they were tossing about in sight of the coast, and, though in a fast-sailing vessel, consumed more than three weeks in the voyage, which a steamship would perform in half a one. At length they landed, on the 18th of December, at the port of Vera Cruz, the city of the True Cross, on the same spot, then a desolate sand-bank, where Hernando Cortes had first set his foot, more than three centuries ago. But our author shall speak for herself.

"Any thing more melancholy, *délabré*, and forlorn, than the whole appearance of things, as we drew near, cannot well be imagined. On one side, the fort, with its black and red walls; on the other, the miserable, black-looking city, with hordes of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

large black birds, called *spilotes*, hovering over some dead carcass, or flying heavily along in search of carrion. Still, as the goal of our voyage, even its dreary aspect was welcome, and the very hills of red sand by which it is surrounded, and which look like the deserts of Arabia, appeared inviting.

"A boat, full of cocked hats, was now seen approaching from the city, containing the Consul in full uniform, and other authorities. C——n having sent for and obtained permission from the Governor, to permit the *Jason*, contrary to established usages, to anchor beneath the castle, a salute of twenty guns was fired from our ship. Being upon deck, I was nearly suffocated with smoke and powder. A salute of the same number of cannon was then fired from the castle, in honor of the first Spanish man-of-war, that has appeared in this port since the Revolution.

"And now we prepared, before the sun went down, to leave our watery prison; and the captain's boat being manned, and having taken leave of the officers, we, that is, C——n, the commander, and I, and my French maid, and her French poodle, got into it. Then came a salute of twenty guns from the *Jason* in our honor, and we rowed off amidst clouds of smoke. Then the fort gave us welcome with the same number of guns, and, amidst all this cannonading, we were landed at the wharf.

"A singular spectacle the wharf presented. A crowd, as far as the eye could reach, of all ages and sexes of Vera-Cruzians (and a very curious set they seemed to be) were assembled to witness His Excellency's arrival. Some had no pantaloons; and others, to make up for their neighbours' deficiencies, had two pair, — the upper slit up the side of the leg, Mexican fashion. All had large hats, with silver or bead rolls, and every tinge of dark complexion, from the pure Indian, upwards. Some dresses were entirely composed of rags, clinging together by the attraction of cohesion; others had only a few holes to let in the air. All were crowding, jostling, and nearly throwing each other into the water, and gazing with faces of intense curiosity.

"But a plume of colored feathers was seen towering above the copper-colored crowd, and immediate passage was made for an aid-de-camp from the Governor, General Guadalupe Victoria. He was an immensely tall man, in a showy uniform all covered with gold, with colossal epaulettes, and a towering plume of rainbow-colored feathers. He brought to C——n the welcome and congratulations of the General, and those Spanish offers of service and devotion which sound agreeably, whatever be their true value." — Vol. I. pp. 37 - 39.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Madame de Calderon gives some particulars of this commander, famous in the revolutionary history of Mexico. One, however, more extraordinary than any she states, is mentioned by Ward, who says, that the General, when secreting himself in the deserts for a year, learned to live without food for five days at a time, and that ever since it has been exceedingly annoying to him to eat more than once in twenty-four hours. Some of our dyspeptics might learn a wholesome lesson under this abstemious chief.

Our author gives a fuller account of a much more distinguished personage, the present president of the Republic, Santa Anna; which, as it presents a novel picture also of the way of life among the great proprietors of the *tierra caliente*, or warm region, as the lower level of the country is styled, we will give *in extenso*.

"Yesterday morning, at two o'clock, we rose by candle-light, with the pleasant prospect of leaving Vera Cruz and of seeing Santa Anna. Two boxes, called carriages, drawn by mules, were at the door, to convey us to Manga de Clavo. Señor V——o, C——n, the commander of the *Jason*, and I, being encased in them, we set off half asleep. By the faint light, we could just distinguish as we passed the gates, and the carriages ploughed their way along, nothing but sand, — sand, — as far as the eye could reach; a few leagues of Arabian desert.

"At length we began to see symptoms of vegetation; occasional palm-trees and flowers, and, by the time we had reached a pretty Indian village, where we stopped to change mules, the light had broke in, and we seemed to have been transported, as if by enchantment, from a desert to a garden. It was altogether a picturesque and striking scene; the huts composed of bamboo, and thatched with palm-leaves, the Indian women with their long black hair standing at the doors with their half-naked children, the mules rolling themselves on the ground, according to their favorite fashion, snow-white goats browsing among the palm-trees, and the air so soft and balmy, the first fresh breath of morning; the dew-drops still glittering on the broad leaves of the banana and palm, and all around so silent, cool, and still.

"The huts, though poor, were clean; no windows, but a certain subdued light makes its way through the leafy canes. We procured some tumblers of new milk, and, having changed mules, pursued our journey, now no longer through hills of sand, but across the country, through a wilderness of trees and flowers, the glowing productions of *tierra caliente*. We arrived about

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

five at Manga de Clavo, after passing through leagues of natural garden, the property of Santa Anna.

"The house is pretty, slight-looking, and kept in nice order. We were received by an aid-de-camp in uniform, and by several officers, and conducted to a large, cool, agreeable apartment, with little furniture, into which shortly entered the Señora de Santa Anna, tall, thin, and, at that early hour of the morning, dressed to receive us in clear white muslin, with white satin shoes, and with very splendid diamond ear-rings, brooch, and rings. She was very polite, and introduced her daughter Guadalupe, a miniature of her mamma, in features and costume.

"In a little while entered General Santa Anna himself; a gentlemanly, good-looking, quietly dressed, rather melancholy-looking person, with one leg, apparently somewhat of an invalid, and to us the most interesting person in the group. He has a sallow complexion, fine dark eyes, soft and penetrating, and an interesting expression of face. Knowing nothing of his past history, one would have said a philosopher, living in dignified retirement, one who had tried the world, and found that all was vanity, one who had suffered ingratitude, and who, if he were ever persuaded to emerge from his retreat, would only do so, Cincinnatus-like, to benefit his country. It is strange, how frequently this expression of philosophic resignation, of placid sadness, is to be remarked on the countenances of the deepest, most ambitious, and most designing men. C——n gave him a letter from the Queen, written under the supposition of his being still President, with which he seemed much pleased, but merely made the innocent observation, 'How very well the Queen writes!'

"It was only now and then, that the expression of his eye was startling, especially when he spoke of his leg, which is cut off below the knee. He speaks of it frequently, like Sir John Ramorny of his bloody hand; and when he gives an account of his wound, and alludes to the French on that day, his countenance assumes that air of bitterness, which Ramorny's may have exhibited, when speaking of 'Harry the Smith.'

"Otherwise, he made himself very agreeable, spoke a great deal of the United States, and of the persons he had known there, and in his manners was quiet and gentlemanlike, and altogether a more polished hero than I had expected to see. To judge from the past, he will not long remain in his present state of inaction, besides having within him, according to Zavala, 'a principle of action for ever impelling him forward.'

"*En attendant*, breakfast was announced. The Señora de Santa Anna led me in. C——n was placed at the head of the table, I on his right, Santa Anna opposite, the Señora on my

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

right. The breakfast was very handsome, consisting of innumerable Spanish dishes, meat and vegetables, fish and fowl, fruits and sweetmeats, all served in white and gold French porcelain, with coffee, wines, &c. After breakfast, the Señora having despatched an officer for her cigar-case, which was gold with a diamond latch, offered me a cigar, which I having declined, she lighted her own, a little paper 'cigarito,' and the gentlemen followed her good example.

"We then proceeded to look at the out-houses and offices; at the General's favorite war-horse, an old white charger, probably a sincerer philosopher than his master; at several game-cocks, kept with especial care, cock-fighting being a favorite recreation of Santa Anna's; and at his *litera*, which is handsome and comfortable. There are no gardens, but, as he observed, the whole country, which for twelve leagues square belongs to him, is a garden. The appearance of the family says little for the healthiness of the *locale;* and indeed its beauty and fertility will not compensate for its insalubrity.

"As we had but a few hours to spare, the General ordered round two carriages, both very handsome, and made in the United States, one of which, conveyed him and C——n, the Señora and me. In the other were the little girl and the officers, in which order we proceeded across the country to the high road, where the diligence and servants, with our guide Don Miguel S——, were to overtake us. The diligence not having arrived, we got down and sat on a stone bench, in front of an Indian cottage, where we talked, while the young lady amused herself by eating apples, and C——n and the General remained moralizing in the carriage.

"Shortly after, and just as the sun was beginning to give us a specimen of his power, our lumbering escort of Mexican soldiers galloped up, (orders having been given by the government that a fresh escort shall be stationed every six leagues,) and announced the approach of the diligence. We were agreeably disappointed by the arrival of a handsome new coach, made in the United States, drawn by ten good-looking mules, and driven by a smart Yankee coachman. Our party consisted of ourselves, Don Miguel, the captain of the *Jason* and his first lieutenant, who accompany us to Mexico. The day was delightful, and every one apparently in good-humor. We took leave of General Santa Anna, his lady and daughter, also of our hospitable entertainer, Señor V——; got into the diligence, — doors shut, — all right, — lash up the mules, and now for Mexico!" — pp. 47 – 52.

Madame de Calderon was not mistaken in supposing that

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

this Mexican Cincinnatus only bided his time to leave the philosophic retirement of the country for the glittering seals of state.

The route of the travellers led them through more of this delicious scenery, which is reflected, with all its bright flush of coloring, in our author's page, as vividly as in a mirror.

"It was difficult to believe, as we journeyed on, that we were now in the midst of December. The air was soft and balmy. The heat, without being oppressive, that of a July day in England. The road lay through a succession of woody country; trees covered with every variety of blossom, and loaded with the most delicious tropical fruits; flowers of every color filling the air with fragrance, and the most fantastical profusion of parasitical plants intertwining the branches of the trees, and flinging their bright blossoms over every bough. Palms, cocoas, oranges, lemons, succeeded one another, and at one turn of the road, down in a lovely green valley, we caught a glimpse of an Indian woman, with her long hair, resting under the shade of a lofty tree, beside a running stream, — an Oriental picture. Had it not been for the dust and the jolting, nothing could have been more delightful. As for Don Miguel, with his head out of the window, now desiring the coachman to go more quietly, now warning us to prepare for a jolt, now pointing out every thing worth looking at, and making light of all difficulties, he was the very best conductor of a journey I ever met with. His hat of itself was a curiosity to us; a white beaver with immense brim, lined with thick silver tissue, with two large silver rolls and tassels round it.

"One circumstance must be observed by all who travel in Mexican territory. There is not one human being or passing object to be seen that is not in itself a picture, or which would not form a good subject for the pencil. The Indian women with their plaited hair, and little children slung at their backs, their large straw hats and petticoats of two colors, the long strings of *arrieros* with their loaded mules, and swarthy, wild-looking faces, — the chance horseman who passes with his *sarape* of many colors, his high, ornamented saddle, Mexican hat, silver stirrups and leather boots, — all is picturesque. Salvator Rosa and Hogarth might have travelled here to advantage, hand-in-hand; Salvator for the sublime, and Hogarth taking him up where the sublime became the ridiculous." — pp. 52 – 54.

After climbing up the steep sides of the table-land, amidst scenes checkered with beauty and sterility, but always in the highest degree picturesque, the party descended the mountain

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

slopes towards the Valley of Mexico. We regret that our limits will not allow us to give her spirited account of her entrance into the ancient capital of Montezuma. The whole population of the city, all who could command a carriage or a horse, came out to welcome the ambassador, who brought the olive branch in his hand. Most unfortunately, it was becoming late in the afternoon, and the rain fell in sheets of water, such as are met with only in tropical climates. It certainly was a damper to their brilliant *entrée* into the capital. The bright sun of the next day dispelled the gloom of their first impressions, and for some weeks the diplomatic train found abundant amusement and occupation in the magnificent entertainments given in honor of their arrival.

In the brilliant gallery of pictures, which our fair author has sketched, sometimes of the city and its inhabitants, embracing all classes and descriptions, at others of its beautiful environs, we know not which to select. We will take at hazard her visit to Chapultepec, the favorite retreat of the Aztec princes, not a league from the capital.

"We have spent the day in visiting the castle of Chapultepec, a short league from Mexico, the most haunted by recollections of all the traditionary sites of which Mexico can boast. Could these hoary cypresses speak, what tales might they not disclose, standing there with their long gray beards, and outstretched venerable arms, century after century; already old when Montezuma was a boy, and still vigorous in the days of Bustamante! There has the last of the Aztec emperors wandered with his dark-eyed harem. Under the shade of these gigantic trees he has rested, perhaps smoked his 'tobacco mingled with amber,' and fallen to sleep, his dreams unhaunted by visions of the stern traveller from the far-east, whose sails even then might be within sight of the shore. In these tanks he has bathed. Here were his gardens, and his aviaries, and his fish-ponds. Through these now tangled and deserted woods, he may have been carried by his young nobles in his open litter, under a splendid *dais*, stepping out upon the rich stuffs which his slaves spread before him on that green and velvet turf.

"And from the very rock where the Castle stands, he may have looked out upon his fertile valley, and great capital, with its canoe-covered lakes, and outspreading villages and temples, and gardens of flowers, no care for the future darkening the bright vision.

"Tradition says, that now these caves and tanks and woods

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

are haunted by the shade of the Conqueror's Indian love, the far-famed Doña Marina, but I think she would be afraid of meeting with the wrathful spirit of the Indian emperor.

"The Castle itself, modern though it be, seems like a tradition. The Viceroy Galvez, who built it, is of a by-gone race! The apartments are lonely and abandoned, the walls falling to ruin, the glass of the windows and the carved work of the doors have been sold; and, standing at this great height, exposed to every wind that blows, it is rapidly falling to decay. We were accompanied by Count C——a, and received by a Mexican governor, who rarely resides there, and who very civilly conducted us everywhere. But Chapultepec is not a *show-place.* One must go there early in the morning, when the dew is on the grass, or in the evening, when the last rays of the sun are gilding with rosy light the snowy summits of the volcanoes; and dismount from your horse, or step out of your carriage, and wander forth without guide, or object, or fixed time for return.

"We set off early, passing over a fine paved road, divided by a great and solid aqueduct of nine hundred arches, one of the two great aqueducts by which fresh water is conveyed to the city, and of which the two sources are in the hill of Chapultepec, and in that of Santa Fé, at a much greater distance. When we arrived, the sleepy soldiers, who were lounging before the gates, threw them open to let the carriage enter, and we drew up in front of the great cypress, known by the name of 'Montezuma's Cypress,' a most stupendous tree, dark, solemn, and stately, its branches unmoved as the light wind played amongst them, of most majestic height, and forty-one feet in circumference. A second cypress standing near, and of almost equal size, is even more graceful, and they, and all the noble trees which adorn these speaking solitudes, are covered with a creeping plant resembling gray moss, hanging over every branch like long gray hair, giving them a most venerable and druidical look.

"We wandered through the noble avenues, and rested under the trees, and walked through the tangled shrubberies, bright with flowers and colored berries, and groped our way into the cave, and stood by the large clear tank, and spent some time in the old garden; and then got again into the carriage, that we might be dragged up the precipitous ascent on which stands the Castle, the construction of which aroused the jealousy of the government against the young Count, whose taste for the picturesque had induced him to choose this elevated site for his summer palace." — Vol. I. p. 103 – 105.

One of the most striking features in Mexican society is the ambition of ornament, reaching from the peasant to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the noble, and displayed in the latter by such a prodigal show of jewelry, as is probably not surpassed in any court in Europe. Some of the old Spanish nobles found the means for this in the vast wealth derived from their mines. Among these, we are informed by our author,

"The Count de Regla was so wealthy, that when his son, the present Count, was christened, the whole party walked from his house to the church, upon ingots of silver. The Countess having quarrelled with the Vice-Queen, sent her, in token of reconciliation, a white satin slipper, entirely covered with large diamonds. The Count invited the King of Spain to visit his Mexican territories, assuring him that the hoofs of his Majesty's horse should touch nothing but solid silver from Vera Cruz to the capital. This might be a bravado; but a more certain proof of his wealth exists in the fact, that he caused two ships of the line, of the largest size, to be constructed in Havana at his expense, made of mahogany and cedar, and presented them to the King. The present Count was, as I already told you, married to the beautiful daughter of the *Güera Rodriguez.*" — Vol. I. p. 264.

After this we may not be surprised to find, that the ruling passion, strong in death, should affect the same lavish display, even where such magnificence becomes a mockery. Madame de Calderon tells a whimsical anecdote in relation to this.

"A lady of high rank having died in Mexico, her relatives undertook to commit her to her last resting-place, habited according to the then prevailing fashion, in her most magnificent dress, that which she had worn at her wedding. This dress was a wonder of luxury, even in Mexico. It was entirely composed of the finest lace, and the flounces were made of a species of point which cost fifty dollars a *vara* (the Mexican yard). Its equal was unknown. It was also ornamented and looped up at certain intervals with bows of ribband very richly embroidered in gold. In this dress, the Condesa de —— was laid in her coffin, thousands of dear friends crowding to view her beautiful *costume de mort*, and at length she was placed in her tomb, the key of which was intrusted to the sacristan.

"From the tomb to the opera is a very abrupt transition; nevertheless, both have a share in this story. A company of French dancers appeared in Mexico, a twentieth-rate ballet, and the chief *danseuse* was a little French damsel, remarkable for the shortness of her robes, her coquetry, and her astonishing pirouettes. On the night of a favorite ballet, Mademoiselle Pau-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

line made her *entrée* in a succession of pirouettes, and, poising on her toe, looked round for approbation, when a sudden thrill of horror, accompanied by a murmur of indignation, pervaded the assembly. Mademoiselle Pauline was equipped in the very dress in which the defunct Countess had been buried! Lace, point flounces, gold ribbands; impossible to mistake it. Hardly had the curtain dropped, when the little danseuse found herself surrounded by competent authorities, questioning her as to where and how she had obtained her dress. She replied, that she had bought it at an extravagant price from a French *modiste* in the city. She had rifled no tomb, but honestly paid down golden ounces, in exchange for her lawful property. To the modiste's went the officers of justice. She also pleaded innocent. She had bought it of a man who had brought it to her for sale, and had paid him much more than *à poids d'or*, as indeed it was worth. By dint of further investigation, the man was identified, and proved to be the sacristan of San ——. Short-sighted sacristan! He was arrested and thrown into prison, and one benefit resulted from his cupidity, since, in order to avoid throwing temptation in the way of future sacristans, it became the custom, after the body had lain in state for some time in magnificent robes, to substitute a plain dress previous to placing the coffin in the vault. A poor vanity after all.

"I was told by a lady here, that on the death of her grandchild, he was not only enveloped in rich lace, but the diamonds of three Condesas and four Marquesas were collected together and put on him, necklaces, bracelets, rings, brooches, and tiaras, to the value of several hundred thousand dollars. The street was hung with draperies, and a band of music played, whilst he was visited by all the titled relatives of the family in his dead splendor, poor little baby! Yet his mother mourned for him as for all her blighted hopes, and the last scion of a noble house. Grief shows itself in different ways; yet one might think that when it seeks consolation in display, it must be less profound than when it shuns it." — Vol. I. pp. 134 – 136.

In the midst of this pomp of ornament and dress, one is particularly struck by the contrast afforded by the crowds of *léperos*, a caste of beggars, — or rather compound of beggar and bandit, — who swarm the streets, making it not only annoying, but oftentimes dangerous, to go abroad without an escort, particularly in the less frequented avenues and suburbs. The book contains many striking stories of this anomalous class of personages, as well as of the more daring marauders, for which we cannot find space, but which show such a total

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

absence of a police, as seems scarcely compatible with the existence of society. The following little anecdote shows the amiable terms on which the gentlemen of the road and of the robe stand with one another in Mexico. It is certainly very much *à l'Espagnole*.

"Apropos to which, the —— Consul told us the other day, that some time ago, having occasion to consult Judge —— upon an affair of importance, he was shown into an apartment where that functionary was engaged in conversation with some suspicious-looking individuals, or rather who were above suspicion, their appearance plainly indicating their calling. On the table before him lay a number of guns, swords, pistols, and all sorts of arms. The Judge requested Monsieur de —— to be seated, observing, that he was investigating a case of robbery committed by these persons. The robbers were seated, smoking very much at their ease, and the Judge was enjoying the same innocent recreation; when his cigar becoming extinguished, one of these gentlemen, taking his from his mouth, handed it to the magistrate, who relighted his *puro* (cigar) at it, and returned it with a polite bow. In short, they were completely *hand and glove*." — Vol. I. pp. 239, 240.

Among the objects of greatest interest in the capital, are its religious houses, still continued in all their primitive rigor, and the more curious from the difficulty now of meeting with similar specimens in Europe. They, indeed, seem to carry us back to the twilight of the sixteenth century, in the early part of which many of them were founded. Admission to them, especially those appropriated to the women, is exceedingly difficult to natives, still more so to foreigners. Our author's position secured to her the "Open, sesame!" here, as in every other quarter. In one of these convents, she witnessed the ceremony of taking the veil. It has been often described; but we have never seen a picture of the domestic distress, occasioned by the separation of the destined "bride of Christ" from her family, painted with such touching interest, as in the following passages.

"I had almost made up my mind to see no more such scenes, which, unlike *pulque* and bull-fights, I dislike more and more upon trial; when we received an invitation, which it was not easy to refuse, but was the more painful to accept, being acquainted, though slightly, with the victim. I send you the printed note of invitation.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"'On Wednesday, the —— of this month, at six o'clock in the evening, my daughter, Doña Maria de la Concepcion, P——e ——, will assume the habit of a Nun of the choir and the black veil in the Convent of Our Lady of the Incarnation. I have the honor to inform you of this, intreating you to co-operate with your presence in the solemnity of this act, a favor which will be highly esteemed by your affectionate servant, who kisses your hand.

"'MARIA JOSEFA DE ——.

"'Mexico, June ——, 1840.'

"Having gone out in the carriage to pay some visits, I suddenly recollected, that it was the very morning of the day in which this young girl was to take the veil, and also, that it was necessary to inquire where I was to be placed; for, as to entering the church with the crowd on one of these occasions, it is out of the question; particularly when, the girl being, as in the present case, of distinguished family, the ceremony is expected to be peculiarly magnificent. I accordingly called at the house, was shown up stairs, and, to my horror, found myself in the midst of a 'goodlie companie,' in rich array, consisting of the relations of the family, to the number of about a hundred persons; the Bishop himself in his purple robes and amethysts, a number of priests, the father of the young lady in his general's uniform; she herself in purple velvet, with diamonds and pearls, and a crown of flowers; the *corsage* of her gown entirely covered with little bows of ribband of divers colors, which her friends had given her; each adding one, like stones thrown on a cairn in memory of the departed. She had, also, short sleeves and white satin shoes.

"Being very handsome, with fine black eyes, good teeth, and fresh color, and, above all, with the beauty of youth, for she was but eighteen, she was not disfigured, even by this overloaded dress. Her mother, on the contrary, who was to act the part of Madrina, who wore a dress *fac-simile*, and who was pale and sad, her eyes almost extinguished with weeping, looked like a picture of misery in a ball-dress. In the adjoining room, long tables were laid out, on which servants were placing refreshments for the *fête* about to be given on this joyous occasion. I felt somewhat shocked, and inclined to say, with Paul Pry, 'Hope I don't intrude.' But my apologies were instantly cut short, and I was welcomed with true Mexican hospitality; repeatedly thanked for my kindness in coming to see the nun, and hospitably pressed to join the family feast. I only got off upon a promise of returning at half past five, to accompany them to the ceremony, which, in fact, I greatly preferred to going there alone.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I arrived at the hour appointed, and, being led up stairs by the Senator Don —— ——, found the morning party, with many additions, lingering over the dessert. There was some gayety, but evidently forced. It reminded me of a marriage-feast, previous to the departure of the bride, who is about to be separated from her family for the first time. Yet how different in fact this banquet, where the mother and daughter met together for the last time on earth!

"At stated periods, indeed, the mother may hear her daughter's voice, speaking to her as from the depths of the tomb; but she may never more fold her in her arms, never more share in her joys or in her sorrows, or nurse her in sickness; and when her own last hour arrives, though but a few streets divide them, she may not give her dying blessing to the child, who has been, for so many years, the pride of her eyes and heart.

"I have seen no country, where families are so knit together as in Mexico, where the affections are so concentrated, or where such devoted respect and obedience are shown by the married sons and daughters to their parents. In that respect, they always remain as little children. I know many families, of which the married branches continue to live in their father's house, forming a sort of small colony, and living in the most perfect harmony. They cannot bear the idea of being separated, and nothing but dire necessity ever forces them to leave their *father-land.* To all the accounts, which travellers give them, of the pleasures to be met with in European capitals, they turn a deaf ear. Their families are in Mexico, their parents, and sisters, and relatives, and there is no happiness for them elsewhere. The greater, therefore, is the sacrifice, which those parents make, who, from religious motives, devote their daughters to a conventual life.

"——, however, was furious at the whole affair, which, he said, was entirely against the mother's consent, though that of the father had been obtained; and pointed out to me the confessor, whose influence had brought it about. The girl herself was now very pale, but evidently resolved to conceal her agitation, and the mother seemed as if she could shed no more tears, — quite exhausted with weeping. As the hour for the ceremony drew near, the whole party became more grave and sad, all but the priests, who were smiling and talking together in groups. The girl was not still a moment. She kept walking hastily through the house, taking leave of the servants, and naming, probably, her last wishes about every thing. She was followed by her younger sisters, all in tears.

"But it struck six, and the priests intimated that it was time

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to move. She and her mother went down stairs alone, and entered the carriage, which was to drive them through all the principal streets, to show the nun to the public, according to custom, and to let them take their last look, they of her, and she of them. As they got in, we all crowded to the balconies to see her take leave of her house, her aunts saying, 'Yes, child, *despidete de tu casa*, take leave of your house, for you will never see it again!' Then came sobs from the sisters, and many of the gentlemen, ashamed of their emotion, hastily quitted the room. I hope, for the sake of humanity, I did not rightly interpret the look of constrained anguish, which the poor girl threw from the window of the carriage at the home of her childhood.

"They drove off, and the relations prepared to walk in procession to the church. I walked with the Count S——o; the others followed in pairs. The church was very brilliantly illuminated, and, as we entered, the band was playing one of *Strauss's* waltzes! The crowd was so tremendous, that we were nearly squeezed to a jelly in getting to our places. I was carried off my feet between two fat Señoras in mantillas and shaking diamond pendants, exactly as if I had been packed between two movable feather beds.

"They gave me, however, an excellent place, quite close to the grating, beside the Countess de S——o, that is to say, a place to kneel on. A great bustle and much preparation seemed to be going on within the convent, and veiled figures were flitting about, whispering, arranging, &c. Sometimes a skinny old dame would come close to the grating, and, lifting up her veil, bestow upon the pensive public a generous view of a very haughty and very wrinkled visage of some seventy years standing, and beckon into the church for the major-domo of the convent, (an excellent and profitable situation by the way,) or for *Padre* this or that. Some of the holy ladies recognised and spoke to me through the grating.

"But, at the discharge of fireworks outside the church, the curtain was dropped, for this was the signal, that the nun and her mother had arrived. An opening was made in the crowd, as they passed into the church, and the girl, kneeling down, was questioned by the Bishop, but I could not make out the dialogue, which was carried on in a low voice. She then passed into the convent by a side door, and her mother, quite exhausted and nearly in hysterics, was supported through the crowd to a place beside us, in front of the grating. The music struck up; the curtain was again drawn aside. The scene was as striking here, as in the convent of Santa Teresa, but not so lugubri-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ous. The nuns, all ranged around and carrying lighted tapers in their hands, were dressed in mantles of bright blue, with a gold plate on the left shoulder. Their faces, however, were covered with deep black veils. The girl, kneeling in front, and also bearing a heavy lighted taper, looked beautiful, with her dark hair and rich dress, and the long black lashes resting on her glowing face. The churchmen near the illuminated and magnificently-decked altar, formed, as usual, a brilliant back-ground to the picture. The ceremony was the same, as on the former occasion, but there was no sermon.

"The most terrible thing to witness, was the last, straining, anxious look, which the mother gave her daughter through the grating. She had seen her child pressed to the arms of strangers, and welcomed to her new home. She was no longer hers. All the sweet ties of nature had been rudely severed, and she had been forced to consign her, in the very bloom of youth and beauty, at the very age in which she most required a mother's care, and when she had but just fulfilled the promise of her childhood, to a living tomb. Still, as long as the curtain had not fallen, she could gaze upon her, as upon one, on whom, though dead, the coffin-lid is not yet closed.

"But, while the new-made nun was in a blaze of light, and distinct on the foreground, so that we could mark each varying expression of her face, the crowd in the church, and the comparative faintness of the light, probably, made it difficult for her to distinguish her mother; for, knowing that the end was at hand, she looked anxiously and hurriedly into the church, without seeming able to fix her eyes on any particular object; while her mother seemed, as if her eyes were glazed, so intently were they fixed upon her daughter.

"Suddenly, and without any preparation, down fell the black curtain, like a pall, and the sobs and tears of the family broke forth. One beautiful little child was carried out almost in fits. Water was brought to the poor mother; and, at last, making our way with difficulty through the dense crowd, we got into the sacristy. 'I declare,' said the Countess —— to me, wiping her eyes, 'it is worse than a marriage!' I expressed my horror at the sacrifice of a girl so young, that she could not possibly have known her own mind. Almost all the ladies agreed with me, especially all who had daughters, but many of the old gentlemen were of a different opinion. The young men were decidedly of my way of thinking; but many young girls, who were conversing together, seemed rather to envy their friend, who had looked so pretty and graceful, and 'so happy,' and whose dress 'suited her so well'; and to have no objection to 'go, and do likewise.'" — Vol. I. pp. 300 – 307.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The situation might well have excited commiseration, if we can judge from the interior discipline of another convent, Santa Teresa, visited by Madame Calderon.

"We found that the nuns had permission to put up their veils, rarely allowed in this order in the presence of strangers. They have a small garden and fountain, plenty of flowers, and some fruit; but all is on a smaller scale, and sadder, than in the Convent of the Incarnation. The refectory is a large room with a long narrow table running all round it; a plain deal table with wooden benches; before the place of each nun, an earthen bowl, an earthen cup with an apple in it, a wooden plate and a wooden spoon; — at the top of the table a grinning skull, to remind them that even these indulgences they shall not long enjoy.

"In one corner of the room is a reading-desk, a sort of elevated pulpit, where one reads aloud from some holy book, whilst the others discuss their simple fare. They showed us a crown of thorns which, on certain days, is worn by one of their number, by way of penance. It is made of iron, so that the nails entering inwards, run into the head, and make it bleed. While she wears this on her head, a sort of wooden bit is put into her mouth, and she lies prostrate on her face till dinner is ended; and while in this condition, her food is given her, of which she eats as much as she can, which probably is none.

"We visited the different cells, and were horror-struck at the self-inflicted tortures. Each bed consists of a wooden plank raised in the middle, and on days of penitence, crossed by wooden bars. The pillow is wooden, with a cross lying on it, which they hold in their hands when they lie down. The nun lies on this penitential couch, embracing the cross, and her feet hanging out; as the bed is made too short for her upon principle. Round her waist she occasionally wears a band with iron points turning inwards; on her breast a cross with nails, of which the points enter the flesh, of the truth of which I had melancholy ocular demonstration. Then, after having scourged herself with a whip covered with iron nails, she lies down for a few hours on the wooden bars, and rises at four o'clock. All these instruments of discipline, which each nun keeps in a little box beside her bed, look as if their fitting place would be in the dungeons of the Inquisition. They made me try their *bed and board*, which I told them would give me a very decided taste for early rising.

"Yet they all seem as cheerful as possible, though it must be confessed, that many of them look pale and unhealthy. It is said, that, when they are strong enough to stand this mode of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

life, they live very long; but it frequently happens that girls who come into this convent, are obliged to leave it from sickness, long before the expiration of their noviciate."—Vol. II. pp. 10, 11.

Yet the penance of the unfortunate recluse was not more severe, than that voluntarily incurred at certain seasons by the gay inhabitants of the capital, as the following thrilling description will show.

"But the other night I was present at a much stranger scene, at the discipline performed by the men; admission having been procured for us by certain means, *private but powerful*. Accordingly when it was dark, enveloped from head to foot in large cloaks, and without the slightest idea of what it was, we went on foot through the streets to the church of San Agustin. When we arrived, a small side door apparently opened of itself, and we entered, passing through long vaulted passages, and up steep winding stairs, till we found ourselves in a small railed gallery, looking down directly upon the church. The scene was curious. About one hundred and fifty men, enveloped in cloaks and *sarapes*, their faces entirely concealed, were assembled in the body of the church. A monk had just mounted the pulpit, and the church was dimly lighted, except where he stood in bold relief, with his gray robes and cowl thrown back, giving a full view of his high bald forehead and expressive face.

"His discourse was a rude but very forcible and eloquent description of the torments prepared in hell for impenitent sinners. The effect of the whole was very solemn. It appeared like a preparation for the execution of a multitude of condemned criminals. When the discourse was finished, they all joined in prayer with much fervor and enthusiasm, beating their breasts and falling upon their faces. Then the monk stood up, and, in a very distinct voice, read several passages of Scripture descriptive of the sufferings of Christ. The organ then struck up the *Miserere*, and all of a sudden the church was plunged in profound darkness; all but a sculptured representation of the Crucifixion, which seemed to hang in the air illuminated. I felt rather frightened, and would have been very glad to leave the church, but it would have been impossible in the darkness. Suddenly, a terrible voice in the dark, cried; 'My brothers! when Christ was fastened to the pillar by the Jews, he was *scourged!*' At these words, the bright figure disappeared, and the darkness became total. Suddenly, we heard the sound of hundreds of scourges descending upon the bare flesh. I cannot conceive of any thing more horrible. Before ten minutes had passed, the sound became *splashing*, from the blood that was flowing.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I have heard of these penitences in Italian churches, and also that half of those who go there, do not really scourge themselves; but here, where there is such perfect concealment, there seems no motive for deception. Incredible as it may seem, this awful penance continued, without intermission, for half an hour! If they scourged *each other*, their energy might be less astonishing.

"We could not leave the church, but it was perfectly sickening; and, had I not been able to take hold of the Señora ——'s hand, and feel something human beside me, I could have fancied myself transported into a congregation of evil spirits. Now and then, but very seldom, a suppressed groan was heard, and occasionally the voice of the monk, encouraging them by ejaculations, or by short passages from Scripture. Sometimes the organ struck up, and the poor wretches in a faint voice tried to join in the *Miserere*. The sound of the scourging is indescribable. At the end of half an hour, a little bell was rung, and the voice of the monk was heard, calling upon them to desist; but such was their enthusiasm, that the horrible lashing continued louder and fiercer than ever.

"In vain he entreated them not to kill themselves; and assured them that Heaven would be satisfied, and that human nature could not endure beyond a certain point. No answer, but the loud sound of the scourges, which are many of them of iron, with sharp points that enter the flesh. At length, as if they were perfectly exhausted, the sound grew fainter, and, little by little, ceased altogether. We then got up in the dark, and, with great difficulty, groped our way in the pitch darkness through the galleries and down the stairs, till we reached the door, and had the pleasure of feeling the fresh air again. They say that the church floor is frequently covered with blood after one of these penances, and that a man died the other day in consequence of his wounds.

"I then went to the house of the —— Minister, where there was a *réunion*, and where I found the company comfortably engaged in eating a very famous kind of German salad, composed of herrings, smoked salmon, cold potatoes, and apples, (salmagundi?) and drinking hot punch. After the cold, darkness, and horrors of the church, this formed rather a contrast; and it was some time before I could shake off the disagreeable impression left by the *desagravios*, and join in the conversation." — pp. 407–409.

Such are the transitions from scenes of penance to scenes of pleasure in this motley capital, where merry mummeries and mortifications, fastings and *fêtes*, chase one another in continual circle, converting the city alternately into a carnival

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

scene, and a house of correction. This may be well for the stranger, who sees novelty succeeding to novelty, while he is present at one long but ever-shifting spectacle. But for the people, thus eternally occupied with the pantomime rehearsal of the events of Scripture history, instead of the real and practical duties of the life before them, their days pass away in a round of busy idleness, in which ceremony takes place of conduct, and empty form of substance. With all their show of penitence and voluntary penance, the higher classes of Mexico are as frivolous, and the lower as corrupt, — probably more corrupt, than in any capital in Christendom.

But we are already exceeding our limits, which we regret will allow us no room for further quotation. Enough has been done in this way to show our readers the quality of the book. We have given, however, but a faint idea of the richness and singular variety of its topics, which, far from being confined to the capital, embrace various excursions in the environs and in distant parts of the country, — two of them of a bold and singularly romantic character, made on horseback for the distance of near a thousand miles. The work contains, moreover, the account of two stormy revolutions in the capital, the stirring events of which quicken the interest of the narrative, and prevent any of the languor stealing over it, which might grow out of a picture, too prolonged, it might be, of unbroken tranquillity.

The present volumes make no pretensions to enlarge the boundaries of our knowledge in respect to the mineral products of the country, its geography, its statistics, or, in short, to physical or political science. These topics have been treated with more or less depth by the various travellers, who have written since the great publications of Humboldt. We have had occasion to become tolerably well acquainted with their productions. And we may safely assert, that for spirited portraiture of society, — a society unlike any thing existing in the Old World, or the New, — for picturesque delineation of scenery, for richness of illustration and anecdote, and for the fascinating graces of style, no one of them is to be compared with "Life in Mexico."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ART. VII. — 1. *What shall we do with the Insane?* By EDWARD JARVIS. Louisville, Ky.
2. *American Hospital Reports.*

IT has always been a defect of the social system, that a part of the population is dependent upon the rest for the means of subsistence. It is as true in the nineteenth, as it was in the first century, "The poor ye have always with you"; and the question, which has been asked by statesmen of all ages and of all countries, "What can best be done with them?" remains as yet without a satisfactory answer. In its early stages, society disposes of the question summarily, ridding itself of the old and the helpless by violence or exposure; but with advancing civilization better feelings are developed, and men revolt at such treatment of the unfortunate. They preserve the feeble in life, and pauperism appears.

The first efforts for the relief of the dependent, are generally the dictates of blind feeling, unenlightened by intellect, and therefore they often fail of their object. Hence we see private charity, and charitable institutions, often disappointing the hopes of the benevolent; and vast and expensive systems for the relief of the poor are entailed upon society, which are of doubtful efficacy, if they do not act as positive premiums upon pauperism. At any rate, so many difficulties surround the subject, and so manifest has been the failure of public systems for the support of the poor, that many wise and good men question their expediency; and they adduce powerful arguments to show that society, as such, should never step forth to relieve want, which could have been foreseen and provided against, or to assume responsibilities and cares, which should devolve upon individuals. It is maintained, and with much plausibility, that private charity is the natural source of comfort and support for the suffering and the needy, and that it would be sufficient for all purposes, if society, by assuming the charge of the poor, did not prevent its exercise, and thus check its developement. Be this as it may, it is certain, that there are many cases of want or suffering, which in the present state of society could not have been foreseen or avoided by the victims; which private charity is not competent to relieve; and the care of which certainly

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

devolves upon society, especially as some of them are caused by its defective organization. Hence arises the obligation of society to provide for, and instruct helpless orphans, the blind, and the deaf-mutes, and to take care of the insane. It is of this last class that we propose to say a few words in the following article.

Of all the ills which flesh is heir to, there is perhaps none so dreadful as insanity. Utter poverty, hideous deformity, mutilation of limbs, deafness, blindness, all these, sad as they are, leave alive the human affections, and admit the consolations of sympathy and love; while insanity not only makes man utterly dependent upon others for the supply of his physical wants, but it strips him of the noblest attributes of humanity. It so utterly sears his heart, that no affection for another can grow upon it, no love from others can penetrate within it; and the unhappy victim sinks into apathetic indifference to common decency, or is so excited as to crush the life out of the mother who bore him, as coolly as he would trample upon a worm.

Of insane persons and idiots, there are, in the United States, according to the census of 1840, 17,434; in New England 3,576; and in Massachusetts, 1,271. Of these last, 644 are at public charge, and 627 at private charge. But, appalling as this statement is, it is unfortunately short of the truth, for the Pauper Abstract, published by the State authority in the same year, gave 887 as the number at public charge in Massachusetts. The cause of the discrepancy is clear; the town officers, besides a personal acquaintance with all the individuals in their neighbourhood, have the means of knowing, from the town records, how many insane are at public charge; while the United States Marshals, embracing larger sections, and taking hearsay evidence, miss those cases in which persons are ashamed to own they have an insane relative. The same discrepancy has occurred in other States, whence local returns have been made; so that we are safe in putting down the insane and idiots of Massachusetts, who are at public charge, to be at least 887.* There are no

* It is to be regretted, that the United States census is vitiated by carelessness in regard to the statistics of insanity. For instance, the number of insane, among colored people of certain towns, is put down as *greater than the whole number of colored people in the same towns;* this is the case with nine towns in Maine, twelve in Michigan, one in Iowa, ten in Illinois, five

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

means of testing the accuracy of the United States census in regard to the number of those at private charge, which it states to be 627; but, the same causes for concealment operating still more strongly than in the case of the paupers, we may safely add to it in the same proportion, and compute the real number to be at least 862; which, added to that of the paupers, gives us the number of 1749 insane and idiots in this Commonwealth.

What is the duty of the State towards these its unfortunate children? With regard to the paupers it is clear and imperative; it is what should be the duty of every Christian government, — to provide the best means for the cure of the curable, and to take kind care of the incurable. This duty of society, besides being urged by every consideration of humanity, will be seen to be more imperative if we consider that insanity is in many cases the result of imperfect or vicious social institutions and observances. Most writers assert, that insanity is not known among savage nations; but, without admitting this to be strictly true, it cannot be denied that civilization, in its progress, is rife with causes which over-excite individuals, and result in the loss of mental equilibrium. We have hardly space to allude to all of these; but among them are revolutions, party strifes, unwise and capricious legislation, causing commercial speculations and disasters; false standards of worth and rank; undue encouragement of the propensities and passions; social rivalry; social intemperance; some fashions and conventional usages; religious and political excitement. These, and a variety of other causes, for which society is in fault, are productive of a large proportion of the cases of insanity which exist in its bosom. But if to these we add the still larger number, which arise from ignorance of the natural laws, which ignorance society should enlighten by providing proper public instruction, we can fairly lay at its door almost all of the cases of insanity which occur.

There is, of course, some uncertainty about the proportion

in Indiana, thirty-seven in Ohio; seven in Massachusetts; one in Connecticut; three in Vermont; sixteen in New York; and nine in New Hampshire; nevertheless, the sums total of the whole State, are less than the more careful returns by local authorities of pauper statistics. We have found some errors also, though not important ones, in the return of blind persons.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the insane to the whole population in large countries ; but the researches of scientific men have been sufficiently accurate for pretty near approximation to the truth ; and from these we learn, that, as a general rule, insanity is unknown among savage, and rare among barbarous nations, and that among civilized people it is most frequent where there is, if not the highest civilization, the greatest intensity of mental action.

In Holland the insane are in proportion to the whole population about as . . 1 to 1233.
" France . . . . 1 " 1000.
" England . . . . 1 " 793.
" Scotland . . . . 1 " 563.
" New Hampshire . . . 1 " 466.
" Connecticut . . . . 1 " 425.
" Massachusetts . . . 1 " 421.

This proportion, drawn from recent authorities, may not be exact to a fraction ; but we believe it to be about the true one. It would not seem, at first, to correspond with the difference of national character ; and yet in reality it does. An incident, which in a town of France or Italy would gather an eager, animated, excited crowd, would, in New England, attract the attention of a few quiet, cold, and silent observers ; but, long after the former had forgotten it, the latter would be pondering it deeply, and drawing from it a subject for moralizing or speculating. The *Bourse* of Paris, and the commercial marts of other European cities, will be filled with a bustling throng of agitated men, whose flashing eyes, shrill voices, and violent gesticulations would seem to indicate an intense anxiety about some daring speculation, or some momentous enterprise ; while *on Change*, in State Street, or Wall Street, you shall see men of the same class, engaged in bolder speculations, and more important enterprises, who yet are cool, and taciturn, and cautious. But follow the same groups to their evening occupations, and you will find the former enjoying a convivial dinner, or laughing at a comedy, while many of the latter are leaning their feverish heads upon their hands, and still pondering, with intense thought, upon the means of carrying on their bold schemes.

We, of the North, are called a cold-blooded people ; and it may be so ; but the blood rushes with the momentum, as

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

well as the coldness, of quicksilver, through our veins. We live upon the high-pressure principle within, and pile on additional atmospheres of caution and reserve without, in order to prevent an explosion. Men walk the streets with measured gait and solemn aim, looking as stiff as a steamboat boiler, but, like that, perhaps, are heaving with an inward force just ready to rend them. There is no creed so comprehensive, no dogma so contracted, no scheme so wild, but cold and iron men will embrace and cherish it, with

> "*all the zeal,*
> Which young and fiery converts feel."

They wait not until a cloud, as big as a man's hand, shall portend that it is to cover the firmament, but the very specks on their finger nails, steadily regarded, soon grow big enough to exclude every thing else from their mental horizon. Then, the general and exciting struggle for wealth, with all its exhilarating hopes, its sudden reverses, its constant fluctuations; and the more general anxiety for the good opinion of others, which twists so many into false positions, represses so many natural impulses, and gives so much care and anxiety about appearances.

But, be the causes what they may, here, within the precincts of Massachusetts, are more than seventeen hundred human beings, our fellow-citizens, who are insane or idiotic; and of these, eight hundred and eighty-seven are entirely dependent upon the public for food and clothing, for the means of keeping out of fire and water, and for restraint from imbruing their hands in the blood of their fellows. And how does the public discharge its duty towards them? The State makes provision, in its noble establishment at Worcester, for 229 patients, but the poor do not have the sole benefit of this; and the County of Suffolk provides for 100 more, in its commodious and excellent Hospital at South Boston. The others, over 500 in number, are, for the most part, in the almshouses and the jails.

We select, for description, the establishment at South Boston, as we knew it under the excellent management of Dr. Butler, because its patients are wholly of the pauper class. The building is a commodious and pleasant one, constructed expressly for the purpose, with all the modern improvements, and pleasantly situated upon the seashore, with a garden in front. Its inmates were of the worst and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

most hopeless class of cases; they were the raving madmen, and the gibbering idiot, whom, in the language of the inspectors,* we had formerly seen, "tearing their clothes amid severe cold, lacerating their bodies, contracting most filthy habits, without self-control, unable to restrain the worst feelings, endeavouring to injure those who approached them, giving vent to their irritation in the most passionate, profane, and filthy language; fearing and feared, hating and almost hated!" Now, they are all neatly clad by day, and comfortably lodged in separate rooms by night. They walk quietly, and with self-respect, about the spacious and airy halls, or sit in listening groups around the daily paper; or they dig in the garden, or handle edge-tools, or stroll about the neighbourhood with kind and careful attendants. They attend soberly and reverently upon religious exercises, and make glad music with their united voices. Such is the situation of the insane and idiots of the city of Boston; and although only 28 out of 171 have been cured, and the rest will probably wear out their lives in hopeless insanity, yet there is a melancholy pleasure in witnessing the great amount of animal happiness they enjoy, in seeing the kind regard paid to prostrate humanity, — the respect shown to the deserted temple of reason. It is only, as it were, twining fresh flowers on the graves of the dead; still it is a grateful sight to the humane, and a more certain indication of high civilization, than the most refined taste in literature and the arts, or the most fastidious observance of social etiquette.

But, alas! such is not the picture presented by the insane in most other parts of our Commonwealth; for, saving those at Worcester, they are incarcerated in the same prisons with criminals; they are immured in narrow and cheerless cells; they are under the charge of ignorant and sometimes of depraved persons; or they are in the almshouses, shut up in cold and cheerless rooms, sometimes chained to the walls, often confined in narrow cages, without a chair or bed, and with nothing but the straw on which they lie down like the brutes.

But such general description cannot convey an adequate idea of the utterly forlorn and degraded condition, to which scores and hundreds of our brethren are reduced; we will, therefore, give some particular cases, which we have our-

* *Report of the Inspectors of Prisons for the County of Suffolk*, December, 1841, pp. 44, 45.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

selves witnessed, during the last three months, in places within thirty miles of Boston.

In one of these towns we approached a large old building, like a farmhouse, and were about to inquire for the poor-house, when our attention was attracted by a sort of cage or pen, constructed at the end of a wood-shed, facing upon the road. The thought occurred, that it might be the cage of an insane person. We dismounted and approached the place, and, looking through the bars, found it was a cage about six feet square. The floor was covered with trampled straw; and we saw only an old, ragged, and filthy coverlet, in one corner; but, as we looked more narrowly at this, a sudden motion of one side of it disclosed the head and face of a human being, which were hidden again, as soon as the glaring eyes had been fixed for an instant upon us.

The first shock was too painful to be described; to find humanity so utterly degraded, to see a human being crouching, like a wild beast in his lair, caged up by the side of the public road, exposed to the gaze of every passer by, unwashed, unshaven, unshorn, with no covering but a filthy coverlet, with not even a cup of water by his side, was revolting beyond measure.

Having found the keeper of the house, we unfastened the door of the cage and entered it. There was no article of furniture at all; nothing but the straw, with here and there a stale crust of bread. The poor inmate was crouching in a corner, and drawn up in the smallest possible space; he would not speak nor move, except when we attempted gently to uncover his head, which he would bury in the folds of his rotten coverlet, and by his motions disclose to sight his naked limbs. We made some inquiries concerning his history, and found, that he was about forty years old; that he had once been the owner of a small farm in the neighbourhood; that he had suffered, or supposed he had suffered, grievous wrong, and had become a maniac; he had been sent to a hospital, but was returned upon the town as incurable, and put into this den, probably for life. The keeper did not seem to be an inhuman man, but was ignorant, and utterly unfit for the care of the insane. On being asked, how he managed him, he replied, that he had now no difficulty, and "had not *licked* him for over a year!"—that at first he "had a fight with him, and had to knock him down four times

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

before he could master him;" and that "since then he had been obedient." He added, however, that the overseers of the poor had charged him never to strike the man again.

In the next town to this, we found in a shed adjoining the almshouse, and in an inclosure twelve feet long by about eight feet wide, made with oak plank and without any window, a middle-aged man, stark mad, and in a state of entire nudity. His condition was about the same as that of the poor creature last described, except that his pen was larger, and was not exposed to the gaze of every passer-by; but he was in a state of entire privation of all the comforts, and even of the common decencies, of life. The almshouse was clean, and the keeper's family seemed worthy, humane people, who took good care of all the inmates, except the poor wretch in the shed; for him, they seemed to think they had done all, when they thrust through the narrow opening in his cage, his daily allowance of food and drink.

In another town, the keeper of the almshouse conducted us to a small out-building, where we found a young man of fair complexion, clad in a coarse woollen dress, leaning motionless as a statue against the wall, and his eyes cast sadly down upon the trampled straw, which was the only furniture of his solitary pen. Around his bare neck was an iron collar, from which hung a heavy iron chain, by which he was fastened to the wall. He had been crossed in love; had become a maniac; was pronounced incurable, sent back upon the town, and chained up, for life, perhaps, like a wild hyena. Yet he seemed not to be dangerous; we approached him, spoke to him, lifted his chain, and examined his condition. The keeper seemed to be a respectable farmer, and was disposed to do what he could for the sufferer, but that was nothing.

In another town, on inquiring at the almshouse, we were informed that there was one insane woman confined there. On requesting to see her, some reluctance was manifested, and a person was sent up stairs to make her decent, and to give her some kind of covering, as we were told that perhaps she was naked. We followed the attendant and found, in a large room, an old woman lying in bed, apparently near her end, and, on the other side of the room, a woman about forty years of age, extended upon the floor and covered with an old rug. This was the insane person, whom we found to be not

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

furious, but quiet and timid. She was reluctant to rise; but, when she did so, we found that she was chained by the leg, and fastened to the wall. And this because the town would not afford the gentle sufferer an attendant to keep her out of harm; for we were told that she was not dangerous, but that she would wander about, or divest herself of her clothes, and perhaps hurt herself, and therefore they chained her up.

On a visit to the prison and almshouse in yet another town, we found twenty-two lunatics in the former, and three in the latter. Those in the prison seemed comfortable, as it regards food, clothing, and lodging; but were mixed up without any regard to classification, and without any proper care, so that the mild and curable might soon become as bad as the worst. At the almshouse, far away from the inhabited part of the building, in a sort of shed, were built up three cages, in one of which was confined a poor drivelling idiot, — cold, filthy, and neglected. Opposite to him was a strong middle-aged man, storming up and down in his dismal and dirty pen, brandishing his naked arms, and blaspheming at the top of his voice. In the next enclosure, separated only by coarse plank, which hardly obstructed vision, was a poor, trembling, comely girl, scarcely seventeen years old. She was not insane, nor entirely idiotic, they said, but only *silly*. And for this she was confined in a pen, far away from any of her sex; in close proximity with a half naked, yelling maniac, and within a few feet of a gibbering idiot! Of all the sad sights we saw in that town, the image of this poor girl will rest longest on the memory. As we unfastened the door of her wretched apartment, and entered it, she slunk trembling away, and crouched whining in a corner; and, as we stretched out a hand toward her, she screamed, as if anticipating a blow; but, when we placed it gently on her head, and spoke in kindly tones to her, the screams subsided into a giggling laugh, which was not so silly but that it indicated pleasure, and we thought gratitude, for unexpected kindness.

We could furnish many other cases of almost equal horror, which we have ourselves witnessed; and, should we be allowed to make extracts from the journal of a friend, who has traversed every part of Massachusetts on an errand of mercy, and taken note of the condition of the inmates of jails and almshouses, we could fill a volume; but enough has been

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

said, we trust, to awaken the sympathies of our readers, and to enlist them in behalf of the effort now making to provide comfortable accommodations for all the insane of this State. And, if there be any whose zeal should wane, after they have closed these pages, let them think of that poor girl whom we have described, — not indeed as we have feebly portrayed her, but as she is now, when night comes on, and she is left in darkness, and crouches down trembling upon her straw, and stops her ears as she hears the strong maniac howling in the next pen, and perhaps smiting with heavy fists upon the boards which make their only separation; and let them reflect that there are many such cases of misery among us; that they themselves, or, what they would account worse, some sister or friend, may one day be brought into the like situation.

It may be asked, Is it possible that the inhabitants of Massachusetts are so ignorant or so inhuman as to allow such treatment? We answer they are neither ignorant nor inhuman. They have made proper provision for a greater proportion of their insane than any other large community in the world; and a careful investigation would show, that in other States of this Union, and in other countries, the condition of the insane, out of the public hospitals, is quite as bad, if not worse than it is in our almshouses and jails. Indeed, from cases which have fallen under our observation, we are inclined to think it is worse; and we could give some descriptions that would shock every sensitive mind. We shall, however, insert only one case in this country, described by Dr. Jarvis, who says he once saw in Pennsylvania, in 1837,

"a poor female confined in a restraining chair made of plank; one strap confined each arm, another the waist, and another passed over the thighs and held her down to her narrow prison. This girl was in a state of furious excitement; she was using the greatest struggles to extricate herself; she was kicking up her feet, endeavouring to strike any one near her; she was boisterous, and spat on any one within reach; she was the very image of a raging fury; and we were told that she had been in this excitement for three years, and the same means of straps and chairs had been as long used to calm her! We trust a similar instance cannot be found elsewhere in America." *

And this was in the great Blockley Almshouse Hospital,

* *Insanity and Insane Asylums*, by E. Jarvis, M. D., Louisville, Ky.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

under the care of the medical professors of the University of Pennsylvania, who take their crowds of students round to teach them practically the treatment of disease. What then must be the condition of the insane in remote and small almshouses.

In Great Britain, it is well known how deplorable was the condition of the insane a few years ago. Browne, a writer of authority, says, that "the accommodations in the Asylum at Limerick appear to be such as we should not appropriate for our dog-kennels." In the mass of evidence elicited by a Parliamentary Report, it is said, one victim was confined

"in one of the oblong troughs, chained down; he had evidently not been in the open air for a considerable time; for, when I made them bring him out, he could not endure the light. Upon asking him, how often he had been allowed to get out of the trough, he said, 'perhaps once a week, and sometimes not for a fortnight.' He was not in the least violent; he was perfectly calm."

Miss Martineau, in her account of the Hanwell Asylum, gives some instances of prejudice and inhumanity, which it would be hard to match in this country. Not only were the convalescent patients forbidden to worship in the church, but they could not ride out in the neighbourhood, lest the delicate nerves of the inhabitants should be shocked.

"A pony chaise had been procured by the superintendent of the insane asylum, in order to present a temptation to many of the patients to prolong their excursions to a distance, and to enable the weak or indolent to diversify their walks within the ground by drives through the neighbourhood. But the inhabitants protested against such an invasion of their rights, such a destruction of their comforts. They could not, forsooth, so delicate was their sensibility, bear the sight of mad people. The circumstance was again attended to, and the lunatic is again deprived of his transient glimpses of happiness, of his visits to what is literally to him another world." *

Esquirol says, of the insane in France,

"I have seen them naked or covered with rags, with nothing but a layer of straw to protect them from the cold dampness of the ground upon which they lay. They were kept upon food of the coarsest kind; they were deprived of fresh air to breathe,

* *Browne on Insanity.* Edinburgh. 1837. p. 173.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and of water to quench their thirst, and even of the most necessary things of life. I have seen them given up to the brutal supervision of jailers. I have seen them in their narrow cells, filthy and unwholesome, without air or light, chained in such dens as one might hesitate to confine ferocious beasts in."

It is reasonable to infer, that, in the less civilized countries of Europe, the condition of the insane is no better; for although, in most of the capitals, asylums have been established upon scientific or humane principles, yet, in the remote districts, all the old horrors are still practised.

The Turks have obtained great credit for humanity to the insane, upon as small capital as for other kinds of humanity. We remember to have known a party of them, closely besieged in a castle, and suffering for water, to let down their donkeys and mules by ropes from the walls, and permit them to fall into the hands of their besiegers rather than to kill them or let them feel the want of water; and we should have supposed them to be merciful, had we not known that they retained their Christian captives, and saw them going round at daybreak, licking from the stones the little moisture that had been deposited in the night, and gradually perishing with thirst.

As for their alleged respect for the insane, they allow those who are not violent to go about, and they pay them a certain superstitious attention, which is sometimes respect, and sometimes mockery. But, the moment they suppose them dangerous, they chain them up; and this not out of regard to the insane, or to others, but to themselves; for the infidels do not chain up their fierce dogs, which, in the time of our perigrinations, at least, were more to be feared than the lunatics, by all but their own masters. As for the medical attention, which they pay to their confined lunatics, we never heard of any other than the administration of a broth made of snakes at every full moon; while for the moral treatment, that is told by the clanking of chains, the cracking of whips, and the shrieks of the inmates, which may be heard without the walls of the hospital of Cairo, and of the *Timarhane* of Constantinople.

But the short-comings of others are no excuse for our own; and although we believe, that, as we have already said, no large community on earth has made comfortable provision for so large a proportion of the insane, as has the State of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Massachusetts, still far be it from the citizens of that liberal Commonwealth to say, pharisaically, in extenuation of any fault, "We are not as other men." The evil is before them; it is in their power to remove it; it is clearly their duty to remove it; and, although no provision at all were made for the insane out of their territory, they should not leave one unprovided for within it.

To say nothing, then, of the 813 insane who are not paupers, and for whom society should provide proper receptacles, although the State is not strictly bound to do so, there are 887 lunatics and idiots who are pauper dependents upon the public. Of these, 250 can be received at Worcester (by crowding), 125 at South Boston, and perhaps 25 at the McLean Asylum. What shall be done with the remaining 487?

It may be demonstrated, we believe, that, in consequence of the number that can be cured, and thus taken from public charge, the expense of keeping them in hospitals would soon be less than under the present system; for, in the words of the Inspectors of the Boston Hospital, "although a patient costs more in a hospital, than in a house of correction or house of industry, yet the smaller number remaining at one time in a hospital, will, before long, cost much less than the larger number of incurable cases accumulating in a house of correction, or house of industry, under the former system."

But we are not inclined to urge the argument of economy, in the matter of duty so sacred, that, until discharged, we have no right to erect monuments to battles, or public works of art, or even costly temples to God. Under the name of economy, the insane and idiots of our own country, have been, and are now, kept in a state of physical degradation which is painful to them, and demoralizing to others. In many towns their keeping for one year is hired out at public auction, in town meeting, to the man who will agree to keep souls and bodies together for the smallest number of dollars and cents; and in many others, the selectmen or overseers of the poor of each year, strive to gain popularity by keeping them in the almshouse for a few mills, or cents, cheaper than their predecessors did. Is it not strange, that Christian men can make it a matter of boast, that, with the public purse-strings in their hands, they have kept town paupers alive three hundred and sixty-five days upon eight cents and five mills per day? And yet some have done it, and will

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

do it, so long as people shall look in every thing to others for approval.

We maintain, that, in the present state of society, the insane and idiots cannot be kept in the almshouse without physical suffering and abuse, and degradation; without becoming worse themselves, and presenting a demoralizing picture to others; without immorality and sin. Much might be said upon the demoralizing influence, upon our children, of thus treating our fellow-creatures. The Spartans, when they made their Helots drunk in public, at least extracted from humanity, which they degraded and crushed, a moral on temperance, for their children; but we, when we show them a man made in God's image, degraded below the brutes, less cared for than the horse and the ox, exhibit our own shame, and teach them a lesson of unmitigated immorality. Hence, it is no uncommon thing to have a crowd of boys about an almshouse cage, trying by mockery, and perhaps by throwing stones, to rouse up the unhappy insane man from temporary quiet, or sleep, into raving fury.

There are objections equally strong against confining the insane, even those who are incurable, in jails and houses of correction. In answer to a query on this subject Dr. Woodward, of the Massachusetts Lunatic Asylum at Worcester, writes to us thus; "In the jails, the insane are hardly in a better condition than in the almshouses; they are crowded together in apartments badly warmed and ventilated; or they are secluded in some solitary room, cold, dirty, ragged, without society, with bad air to breathe, and scanty and bad food to eat." Besides, the sense of justice revolts at the thought of incarcerating innocent victims of misfortune in the receptacle of guilt; and the voice of experience tells us, that when so confined they grow more violent, or sink into *dementia*, are neglected, and ill treated. The jailers and keepers of houses of correction, may be men of humanity; but they do not know how to treat insanity any more than they know how to treat scarlet fever; nor have they the means to do so, provided they did know.

County hospitals have been proposed; but against them every one who is acquainted with the subject will protest, unless indeed they can be so large, and so well endowed as to form independent establishments, with a medical superintendent, and a corps of officers and attendants, who should be exclusively devoted to them. An establishment for the in-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sane must be a thing by itself; must have its own peculiar organization, and not be part of, or an appendage to, another institution; else it will degenerate into a place of mere safe-keeping.

The County of Essex is now building a house of correction at Ipswich; and one wing, with six rooms, is to be devoted to lunatics. This we look upon as a misfortune, because we feel confident, that, as a part of the house of correction, this establishment will not be a proper place for the insane. Their treatment will not form, as it should, the sole object of the establishment. It will be a very poor receptacle for the insane, and yet it will make them so much more comfortable than they are now, in a merely physical point of view, that a half-century will elapse before fully adequate provision will be made for them; because the cost of this building will form an argument for its continued use.

There is no county in Massachusetts (except perhaps Suffolk), where the insane would be deemed numerous enough, or important enough, to require a separate establishment, and the undivided care and attention of a man of eminent talents. Even in that county, indeed, the superintendent is physician to all the other city establishments; and, we are sorry to add, that there has appeared a disposition on the part of some to curtail this beautiful establishment of its present fair proportions, to reduce its expenses to the minimum cost of keeping soul and body together, and to sink it to a mere receptacle for the safe-keeping of paupers, lunatics, and idiots.

On this subject Dr. Woodward writes to us thus; "The proposed county institutions for the insane, can only be of the nature of insane poor-houses, and cannot, in the small counties of the Commonwealth, be provided with the necessary officers, and other means of making them comfortable, without involving an expense greater than that of supporting them in the public institutions at the present prices." Dr. Bell of the McLean Asylum says, "I regard county asylums, and private madhouses, as wholly out of the question."

What then shall be done? It seems to us, that several steps are to be taken; but that the first one should be, to devote the State Hospital to the exclusive accommodation of paupers, in preference to patients who pay. In the last Report from this Institution, it was stated, that one hundred pa-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tients were town paupers, thirty were State paupers, and one hundred were paying patients. The total number at this time is two hundred and forty-one, of whom thirty-four are State paupers, seventy-seven town paupers, and one hundred and thirty are paying patients. It is true, that some of this latter class may be indigent, that the towns may now pay part, and hereafter pay all their expenses; but it is equally true, that some are fully competent to pay their own expenses at other asylums. Now the hospital is full to overflowing; and, as every one who is committed by a Judge of Probate must be received, others must be sent out to make room for them. The trustees discharge such as are selected by the superintendent; and sometimes it happens, that a pauper, who has no earthly friend, is torn away from what had become to him a comfortable and happy home, and thrust back into the noisome and filthy cage, which had been his prison long years before.

We said, he had no earthly friend, but we were wrong. He has what should be a mighty, and kind, and watchful friend of the innocent poor. He has the State, who built this hospital for him, and who should keep him in it, though the wealthiest in the land were knocking for admission at its doors. Nevertheless, although one hundred and thirty paying patients are now in the hospital, there have been discharged for want of room since December 1st, 1841, no less than seventy-eight paupers, as incurable; of whom seventeen would be confessedly dangerous going at large. Most of these unhappy persons have been sent to almshouses, and several of them to jails.*

The following case, which has just come to our knowledge, will show the fate of many of these poor creatures. Elizabeth Stevens, aged about forty years, was formerly confined as a lunatic, in a jail; and was as wretched, wild, and ungovernable as such persons usually are, in such places. Five years ago, she was sent to Worcester, where she was quiet and comfortable, decent and happy. She kept her room and her person tidy; was never violent; would employ herself in knitting; attended church regularly, and,

* These numbers are taken from a letter of Dr. Woodward. We have since then seen the returns for the year, up to December 1st, and find some slight discrepancies, which it is too late to rectify; they do not, however, affect the principle.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

up to the 9th of October last, behaved with propriety. On the 12th of October, she was removed, to make way for others, and carried to the jail of the town. The sight of this roused her to fury, and she refused to enter; but she was carried in by force, and became again a raving maniac. Since then she has been furious; has broken up her bucket, burned her straw bed, smashed her bedstead and her windows, stripped off her clothes, attacked the keeper with an iron grate, and committed every possible outrage; the result probably will be, that she must be chained up, or confined in a cage!

Far be it from us, to say one word in detraction of the Worcester Hospital, that bright ornament of Massachusetts, among the brightest of those tributes to humanity, of which she has paid so many. Founded as it was, mainly by the disinterested efforts of that philanthropic citizen, who is now so freely expending his remaining energies for the education and elevation of future generations; and administered, as it has been, with extraordinary energy, benevolence, and skill, it deserves, and it has, our warmest admiration. It has been a haven of rest, and comfort, and joy, to 1557 unfortunate wrecks of humanity, whose rudder of reason was broken, whose mental compass was lost, who were tossed upon the stormy ocean of life, under a darkened sky, and blown about by every gust of passion; of these, it has sent forth 667 repossessed of their reason, capable of continuing their voyage of life, and of being the guides and protectors of their once fatherless children. High honor then, and thanks, and gratitude, be accorded to the founders and managers of this truly noble charity; but if, by any means, it can be made to confer its benefits more exclusively upon the poor and destitute, and less upon those who have money and friends, let it be done.

We are aware of the difficulties in the way. The law requires, that the furiously mad, who are dangerous to be at large, shall be first admitted; but, even here, preference should be given to paupers, and the man who can pay for his care should be obliged to send him to some other hospital, if this be full. It is sometimes difficult to tell who can pay, and who cannot; and it is clear, from the statistics of the establishment, that many poor are excluded, to make room for those more blessed with worldly goods; but, at

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the same time, it is certain, that there is a looseness about the mode of admission. Patients are sometimes carried to Worcester, with a view of being entered as private pay patients ; but when it is found, that they cannot be received, unless committed by a judge, the friends then apply to one ; the Judges of Probate cannot, or do not, discriminate well in all cases ; and many patients are doubtless committed as dangerous, who are not so, and whose relatives would send them to other establishments, were it not that the State opens them an asylum of the first class, at a price less than the actual cost of their support.

That this is the case, is apparent from the statistics, not only of the State Hospital, but of the McLean Asylum. That establishment, which has always been conducted without ostentation, but upon the highest moral principles, and in the most scientific manner, was founded for the benefit of the insane of this State, giving them the preference over strangers. It received, during the five years preceding the establishment of the State Hospital, 409 patients, of whom only 51, or one-eighth, were from without the State ; while, during the last five years, it received 702 patients, of whom 237, or one-third of the whole, were from without the State, no application having been refused in either period. Now it would be a waste of words to show, that many patients from Massachusetts, who would have gone there, and paid three or four dollars per week, have been sent to Worcester, not because their chance of cure was any better, but because they could be received much cheaper. And yet, during this very time, pauper patients were every month sent away from the State Asylum for want of room, and consigned to the cages and chains of almshouses and jails. It may be said they were incurable, but that matters not to us ; the first duty of the State is to the pauper, and he should not be consigned to a cage, though he be incurable, to make way for a curable paying patient. We do not know the views of the Trustees of the McLean Asylum, but we believe, that, should the State Hospital be closed to all paying patients, there would be a steady demand for admission by patients from Massachusetts, and that provision for 50 more would be made, which (by changing on an average once in six months) would accommodate 100 yearly.

This, however, would be but one step ; for, when the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Worcester Hospital and the South Boston Asylum shall be full of pauper lunatics, there will still be between four and five hundred unprovided for. Now, granting that of these more than 50 per cent. are the entirely demented and merely vegetating idiots, there will remain over 200 unprovided for; and what shall be done with them?

Believing, as we do, that the number of patients in one establishment should never be so large, that the superintendent cannot make himself acquainted with the daily condition of every curable patient, and bring the influence of his own sane mind to bear upon the deranged ones, we should dislike to see overgrown establishments. Dr. Woodward, in his last Report, says;

"Every year, since the Hospital was established, we have had applications enough to fill a good-sized establishment. While it may be doubtful, whether this institution should be enlarged, it is greatly to be desired, that all the insane should find a retreat in an institution designed for their benefit, and especially, that all recent cases should have the means of cure. The appropriations for the accommodation of such should be liberal, and the means of support ample. *Humanity*, as well as *true economy*, dictates this."

The best plan, then, would be, to build a second State Asylum, in some other place, and provide it with accommodations for 200 or 250 patients. There is another consideration in favor of a separate hospital, and that is, the advantage it would offer for classification, with reference, not to the actual condition of the insane, but to their previous character. Every insane pauper becomes the ward of society; but prostitutes, criminals, foreign vagabonds, inebriates, &c., have a claim altogether secondary and inferior to that of the virtuous poor. They should be separated from them, and, if possible, kept in a different establishment; for, be it remembered, even the insane do not lose their self-esteem, and this is often sadly wounded by the necessary herding together in public establishments.

If, however, it should be urged, that the financial situation of the State will not allow the hope of a new hospital, there is still a way by which, without the outlay of so large a sum as would be necessary for a new hospital, additional accommodations may be had for 200 patients, and that is, by adding wings to the Worcester Asylum. Indeed, this may

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be done without encroaching much upon the treasury ; for the fund left by Mrs. Johonnot, for the benefit of the insane, amounts to about $40,000, and it is burdened with annuities amounting to only $ 2500. The State may assume these annuities, for the time they have to run, and apply the principal to enlarging the Worcester Hospital. It will then embrace all the worst cases ; and, provided that grand-juries and citizens will do their duty, there will be a general almshouse and jail delivery of all the unfortunate victims confined in them. It may be necessary to put the price of supporting town paupers very low ; perhaps even some legislation may be necessary, to prevent the confinement of lunatics in almshouses and jails ; but these would be minor difficulties, and would be soon overcome. Massachusetts would then have done, what no other State or community has done, but which is just as much her duty, as though every nation in the world had performed it before her. She will have provided every possible means for the cure, or the comfort, of the unfortunate insane, who, in the course of events, are thrown upon her care.

The arrangement which we have proposed will furnish only a partial remedy ; for, besides the paupers, there will be over five hundred insane unprovided for. But the pressure will fall mainly on the paying patients, and for these we care less, because they have friends to care for them. They can be sent out of the State, or, if any must be sent from the State hospital to the jails and almshouse-cages for safe-keeping, let it be the rich man's son or daughter, and not the poor man's child. Indeed it might not be ill, that the rich should suffer a little what the poor have been and are still suffering ; for one or two cases only would raise a clamor, which would at once provide sufficient hospital accommodations for all.

There are excellent hospitals recently established in Maine and in Vermont, which are not yet full ; and, should they not suffice, new establishments would start up at once. It is true, there are great objections to private madhouses ; the recent developements in England show what horrid abuses are there committed, even at this day ; and we fear, that there are some in this country where a grand jury might find matter for presentment. It is certainly highly desirable, that the State should furnish a place, where all its lunatic

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

subjects might be treated for a moderate compensation; but this, we repeat, is not strictly a State's legal duty, while the care of the paupers is both a legal and a moral duty. Let that then be first discharged, and let us trust, that, when the present generation of incurable cases shall have passed away, better treatment will prevent such an accumulation again; while stricter temperance, and a more general acquaintance with physiology, will diminish the proximate causes.

Let all then, who, by word or deed, can command any influence, exercise it to discharge this duty, and to confer this blessing upon those whom misfortune has made dependent upon them. Let them visit the almshouses and prisons, and see for themselves the deplorable condition of their brethren; their visits will at least have the effect of causing greater vigilance, cleanliness, and attention on the part of the keepers. There is room here for all to work, women as well as men. Come, then, ye whose bosoms heave with just indignation at the oppression of man in distant lands; here are victims of dreadful oppression at your very doors. Come, ye who lament the heathenish customs of ignorant pagans, and would fain teach them Christianity; here are worse than heathenish customs in our very towns and villages. Come, ye who are filled with sickly sentimentality, who weep over imaginary sufferings of imaginary beings, who sigh for some opportunity of doing heroic deeds, who are speculating upon human progress; here are realities to be grappled with, here is misery to be alleviated, here is degraded humanity to be lifted up.

Finally, let the State government be urged to make immediate and ample provision for *all* the indigent insane, cost what it may cost. Massachusetts is not too poor to do any thing that can be shown to be her duty.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ART. VIII. — *The Botanical Text-Book for Colleges, Schools, and private Students; comprising, Part I. An Introduction to Structural and Physiological Botany. Part II. The Principles of Systematic Botany; with an Account of the Chief Natural Families of the Vegetable Kingdom, and Notices of the principal Officinal or otherwise Useful Plants. Illustrated with numerous Engravings on Wood.* By ASA GRAY, M. D., Fisher Professor of Natural History in Harvard University. New York: Wiley & Putnam. Boston: Little & Brown. 1842. 12mo. pp. 413.

WE share largely in the gratitude, with which students of nature are greeting this work of Professor Gray. Botany is a study, to which we have owed much of the pleasure of life. Many a pleasant summer has it made pleasanter for us. When worn with labor, or sick with care, or wearied with the din of business and the turmoil of politics, we have found nothing so refreshing and restorative to spirit and body, as a stroll of as many days or weeks as we could spare, through the rich and variegated old forests, and the pleasant interior towns, of New England. Some botanical guide, — Bigelow or Park, or Beck or Darlington, — has enabled us to add annually to the number of our vegetable acquaintance; and some philosophical friend, like Linnæus, or Smith, or Decandolle, has helped us to understand what we saw, and to enjoy it the more in consequence. Of late years Torrey and Gray have been welcome companions, leading us both to names and to things. We have always returned with a deeper sense of the beauty there is in the world of nature; of the wisdom, of which that beauty is the external decoration; of the resources which awaited us when the time should come, if it should ever come, when we should be able to go off into the country and not come back till we were ready. Such pleasures, so real, so constant, so pure, so inexhaustible, we would gladly see becoming more common; and we therefore welcome, with lively satisfaction, a work which will have the effect of recommending them to every one who will read it.

The work is very properly inscribed to the author of the "Florula Bostoniensis," as the individual, who has done

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more than any other native of New England to advance the study of this enchanting science, and who, had he not had the misfortune to become eminently successful in the lucrative practice of medicine, might at this day have been giving lectures on Botany, filling the chair in which Dr. Gray now sits, and teaching the doctrines of the natural system in some volume or volumes, as good perhaps as the one before us, and with the same skill with which, — it is now thirty years ago, — he brought the lovers of botany to be followers of Linnæus.

Before the appearance of Dr. Bigelow's "Florula," the uneducated student of botany could have found no guide to the names, much less to the properties, of the common plants about him. Whatever might be his genius, he could make no discoveries. All was unknown; no one could tell him what was new. No tolerably full catalogue of New England plants had been made. Dr. Cutler, in a paper inserted in the second volume of the "Memoirs of the American Academy," had described a few of the plants of Essex County. Visiters to this country, and observant persons among the settlers and residents, had sent specimens to Linnæus and other scientific men abroad. These had been summarily described. The elder Michaux, with a power of observation which few things escaped, had traversed this country from north to south, and, on his return to France, had given descriptions of a surprising number of new plants. Professor Peck had visited the White Mountains, and had botanized extensively on the banks of the Piscataqua, and in the neighbourhood of Cambridge. He corresponded with some of the best botanists in this country and in Europe. His plants were lying, carefully named, and nicely ticketed, in his *herbarium* at the Botanical Garden in Cambridge; and some rare ones had been transplanted into the garden and they are there growing to this day; but they had got no nearer the world, for this excellent botanist was as modest as he was learned. Frederic Pursh had bivouacked, shot birds, gathered plants, and drunk brandy in New England, on the lakes, in Canada, and at the south, and had carried back to England a large collection. The descriptions of these had not yet appeared. And, if they had, what were the country gentlemen and gentlewomen of New England to learn of its botany from the French of Michaux, or the Latin of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Pursh? In this state of things, the "Florula" first made its appearance.

What a help that book was, and has been, up to this day, to all who have begun to become acquainted with our native plants, no one who lived before its publication needs to be told. It has helped us to their names. The "Medical Botany" of the same writer has been a most valuable contribution to a knowledge of their properties. It was peculiarly proper, then, that the first native treatise upon Structural, Physiological, and Systematic Botany, should be dedicated to the author of these two works.

The first part of the "Botanical Text-Book" gives a sufficiently full, and perfectly clear account of the principles of the structure and physiology of plants, with the most important of the facts which have been observed up to the present time. To these an interest is imparted, altogether greater than belongs to mere description, by the introduction of some remarkable laws. Even of the more striking of these, we shall be able to give only a rapid and inadequate account.

It has been long known that the great mass of the structure of a vegetable was made up of cellular tissue, (that is, little bladders or vesicles, cohering together by their sides,) of ducts, and of spiral vessels or tubes. Through them, or some of them, sap was known to circulate, — to be drawn up, by some unknown power, by the roots, and carried thence to the remotest extremities of the leaves. The question has been, What is the power by which a large quantity of fluid is thus constantly, and pretty rapidly, carried to such heights? This question seems to be solved, at least the difficulty is carried one step farther back, and many of the facts are reduced to a general law, by the curious discovery made by Dutrochet, which he calls *exosmosis* and *endosmosis*, and which itself seems but a partial expression, — a single form, — of a more comprehensive law, which will have its full explanation in the principles of electricity.

"Roots increase in length entirely, or chiefly, by the addition of new matter to their lower extremities or points, extending very much in the same way as an icicle; except that the new matter, constantly deposited in layer over layer upon its youngest extremity, is supplied from within and not from without.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The points of growing roots, composed of recent tissue, are therefore very delicate and easily injured. Like all newly-formed vegetable matter, they are extremely hygrometrical, and absorb with great rapidity any fluids presented to them. It is by these extremities, called *spongioles* or *spongelets*, that absorption by the root almost exclusively takes place. This power which roots possess of continually adding new living matter to their extremities, enables them to penetrate the solid earth in which they grow, to insinuate themselves into minute crevices, and to extend from place to place, as the nourishment in their immediate vicinity is consumed." — p. 26.

This is a most remarkable power. It is like that of the wedge in the hands of the mechanic. A lad, by small repeated blows with a light hammer, inserts a set of small thin wedges into holes drilled along the side of a mountain quarry. A single blow seems to produce no effect. He has patience, and in a day, or part of a day, a mass of many feet in every dimension is rifted from the solid rock. The delicate terminal spongelets of a tender root, so delicate that the slightest touch will wound them, insinuate their newly-formed cells between the particles of dense earth and gravel and stone, make their way, expand, enlarge, and at last the roots lift up a vast mass of earth on every side of the trunk.

"If the lower end of an open tube, closed with a thin membrane, such as a piece of moistened bladder, be introduced into a vessel of pure water, and a solution of sugar in water be poured into the tube, the water from the vessel will shortly be found to pass into the tube, so that the column of liquid it contains will increase in height to an extent proportionate to the strength of the solution. At the same time the water in the vessel will become slightly sweet; showing that a small quantity of syrup has passed through the pores of the membrane into the water without, while a much larger portion of water has entered the tube. The water will continue to enter the tube, and a small portion of syrup to leave it, until the solution is reduced to the same strength as the liquid without. If a solution of gum, salt, or any other substance, be employed instead of sugar, the same result will take place." . . . . .

"Now, as these phenomena appear to be universal, the porous spongelets, or extremities of the root, may be taken to represent the membranous or porous partition between the sap in the root and stem, charged with the gummy, starchy, or sugary matter it has there dissolved, thus increasing its density, and the much less

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dense fluid which reaches the rootlets from without; in which case the latter ought to enter into the root and stem, as in fact it is found to do. And it should continue to flow into the plant, until the sap in its tubes and cells is reduced to the same density as that of the liquid in the soil to which the rootlets are exposed. This can never happen, however, in a growing plant, where the sap is continually and greatly concentrated by exhalation from the leaves; and consequently, the flow of the sap into the roots, and upward towards the more concentrated portions, ought to continue during the growth of the plant. Whatever other influences may be concerned in the ascending circulation, it cannot be doubted that Endosmosis, combined with exhalation from the leaves, will almost suffice to explain the facts." — pp. 75 – 77, *note.*

And not only will it explain the flowing of the sap into the roots, but its transmission from cell to cell, throughout the whole extent of the plant.

Thus, one after another, are the secrets of nature laid open to us.

Another of the striking general laws is, that which is expressed by the poetical and we think unphilosophical phrase *vegetable metamorphosis.* It was an idea of Linnæus, expanded and distinctly announced, but at the same time perverted, by Wolf and the poet Goethe, that, to use the language now employed, every appendage of the plant, the leaves of the calyx, the petals of the corolla, the stamens and the pistils, are *transformed leaves.* The recognition of the truth which lies under this expression, and the adoption of the theory built upon that truth, have undoubtedly "given a new aspect to botany, and rendered it one of the most philosophical and inductive of the natural sciences." The great importance of the truth we admit. We see and admire the consequences drawn from it. We object to the language in which the truth is expressed. On the seventeenth page, our author says;

"A flower, therefore, being the *transformed extremity* of a stem or branch which has ceased to elongate, terminates the stem which bears it, or prevents its growth in that direction."

We object to this mode of stating the truth. It makes the production of the flower and fruit the effect of accident. As if the great end in view, in the structure of plants, were

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the production of leaves only. It would be more true, and therefore more philosophical, to consider the seed as the end, towards which, through the fruit, the flower, and the leaves, nature is always aiming. This is obvious, from the fact, that the seed, — the fruit in some form, — is the only thing which, in the higher plants, is constant. The leaves are sometimes wanting; sometimes the calyx; sometimes the corolla; sometimes both; sometimes every stamen but one, and every pistil but one. The seed, the fruit, is never wanting. It would be better, therefore, to state, what is clearly the fact, that the great end, towards which every thing in the vegetable structure is subservient, is the production of the fruit. But the law of vegetable structure is a simple law. One principle or law of structure is visible in every appendage and organ of the plant. The rudest form in which this law is observable, is in the seed-leaves of the embryo, in those thick leaves of the bean, for example, which we see expanding just above the surface of the ground in the newly risen plant, and contributing to its nourishment. In a form hardly more perfect, it may be observed in the tough and leathery scales, which, in our climate, enclose most buds, and guard them from the assaults of the elements. It shows itself more perfectly, and in its most common state, in the leaf, which has an upper and an under surface, each performing its peculiar functions, and a double circulation, by which the sap is brought up and exposed to the influence of air, light, heat, and electricity, its superfluous portions are thrown off, and, by processes whose hidden mechanism we can only conjecture from their effects, it is converted into that nourishing fluid, from which are formed wood, gums, resins, sugar, and every thing else derived from the vegetable creation. It assumes higher forms in the calyx and corolla, and performs a higher, perhaps, but an imperfectly known function in those forms. In the floral organs, in the stamens and pistils, an analogous organ, by the same law, fulfils a still more important office, — how, we know not, — but we know, that we can sometimes, when the work is done on a scale suited to the grossness of our imperfect faculties, perceive similar surfaces with similar structure and similar office. But the organ and the law culminate, they are exhibited in their most perfect form, in the fruit. The law is one, in all these varying forms. But it is only of late, that

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

this law has been perfectly detected, that an enchanter has come, powerful enough to compel the Proteus to reveal himself, — one and the same, in all his multitudinous changes.

The truth is, we want a comprehensive, philosophical term, to include leaves, bracts, sepals, petals, stamens, and styles. There is the greatest objection to calling the latter transformed leaves. If we feel ourselves at liberty to conjecture, what was the original plan of the Creator, in the structure of what we call perfect plants, we cannot doubt, that stamens and pistils are as essential a part of that plan, as true leaves ; and it would be just as correct to say, that leaves are transformed or imperfect stamens or petals, as to say, that the latter are transformed leaves.

It is remarkable, that this important law is not only most distinctly laid down by Linnæus, but it is more correctly and philosophically stated than it has been, so far as we know, by any of those, who have flattered themselves, that they have had nearer views of the secrets of Nature, than this great original interpreter of her laws. The passage in the "Philosophia Botanica," as quoted by Dr. Gray, is the following ;

"Principium florum et foliorum idem est. Principium gemmarum et foliorum idem est. Gemma constat foliorum rudimentis. Perianthium sit ex connatis foliorum rudimentis." — *Philosophia Botanica*, p. 101.

The word *principium*, as it was used by Newton, and the other learned contemporaries of Linnæus, and as it is used here, means precisely what we now express by a *law*. The passage may be, therefore, translated, —

"The law of structure, in flowers and leaves, is one. In buds and leaves, it is one. A bud consists of the rudiments of leaves. A perianth (or calyx) may be (*considered as formed*) of the rudiments of leaves grown together."

Thus, in this passage, we see not only the great law in question distinctly stated, but, in the last sentence, we have more than an intimation of another most important principle, which has necessarily a large place in this and other elementary treatises, — that the simplicity and symmetry of structure are often disguised by the growing together of contiguous parts.

Thus, however it may be expressed, one comprehensive

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

law, — now made distinctly visible, and beautifully, though rapidly, laid down in this volume, — pervades the structure of all the appendages of a plant. Another law, not less remarkable, regulates their position or insertion, and order. "The ascending axis or stem is, from the first, a *bud*, that is, a tender growing point, surrounded and protected by appendages, ... arranged in a determinate order, and which, as the axis itself elongates, developes into leaves or some modification of leaves." A bud is, or may be, formed in the axil of each leaf, that is, just above the leaf, in the angle between it and the stem. These buds are developed or remain inactive, according to circumstances. "When developed, they produce branches, organized like the parent stem;" "but they are capable of independent existence, as we see in the case of offsets, cuttings, &c., or of effecting a union with the stem of a plant of a different species, as happens in budding and grafting." Leaves spring from the stem at certain fixed points. "At these points there is a more or less evident change in the tissue of the stem, the fibres and vessels being interlaced horizontally, some of them passing into the leaf; while, in other parts of the stem, they are vertical and parallel. These portions are called *nodes*. One leaf may arise from each node, or two placed opposite, or three or more placed in a ring around the stem." "Since all regular buds are either terminal or axillary, the arrangement of branches depends upon that of the leaves, and upon the number of buds, that are developed." When only one leaf rises from each node, they are said to be alternate, and the branches are also alternate. If the leaves are in pairs, opposite each other, the branches will be opposite.

"Alternate leaves are seldom placed one above the other on exactly opposite points of the stem; but the second leaf will be found to arise a little to the right or left of the opposite point, and the third, a little on one side of the perpendicular to the first; so that, in the apple and pear tree, it is only when we reach the sixth leaf, that we find one placed exactly over any of the five preceding. The sixth, in this instance, is found to be inserted directly over the first, the seventh over the second, the eighth over the third, and so on. Consequently, if we take a branch of an apple tree, and trace a line connecting the bases of the leaves, a regular and simple spiral will be formed. This spiral arrangement of the leaves, variously modified in different plants, but

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

remarkably constant in the same species, is of general, if not universal occurrence. It is not so obvious, when the leaves are placed at considerable distance from each other, and the branch is small in proportion, as in the instance we have mentioned; but it is perfectly apparent, when the leaves are close, as in the pine, the pine-apple (where the spires are in several series), and especially in the Pandanus (cultivated in some of our conservatories), which is actually named *Screw-Pine*, on account of the striking spiral disposition of the leaves. This arrangement is a beautiful provision for securing the symmetry of the branches; for, since the wood is formed of fibrous matter descending from the leaves, if these were not placed in regular order, over every part of the circumference, more wood would be deposited on some sides of the stem than on others. . . . . The number of turns required to complete the spire, the number of leaves in each turn, and of the series of the spires (whether simple, double, triple, &c.) vary greatly in different plants. The spiral arrangement extends to all parts which are modifications of leaves." — pp. 62, 63.

"The flower being a transformed branch, each row or set of organs is a whorl or ring of leaves, which have undergone a peculiar metamorphosis." — p. 101.

"A complete, perfectly regular, and symmetrical flower should, therefore, consist of four whorls of an equal number of parts, alternate with each other. If the calyx be composed of five sepals, the corolla should consist of five petals, alternate with the sepals; the stamens should be five in number, alternate with the petals; and the pistils, also, five in a single whorl, alternate with the stamens. Such a flower being assumed as the *type*, or pattern, all the various diversities, which the nearly 80,000 described species of flowering plants exhibit, should be reducible to this typical or *normal* state, and the nature and causes of their deviations duly explained. The doctrine of vegetable metamorphosis, therefore, as applied to flowers, and to the discovery of their true structure and symmetry, when this is more or less masked or obscured, constitutes a most interesting portion of the botanist's investigation; indeed, the study either of organography or systematic botany cannot be intelligently prosecuted without it. The application of this theory, like the touch of the spear of Ithuriel, causes the most anomalous structures and disguised forms of vegetable organization to reveal their typical state and primitive character." — pp. 106, 107.

There are few things in physical science, — there is nothing in natural history, — more beautiful, than the application of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

this twofold theory of structure and symmetry of arrangement to all vegetable forms. It is the thread of gold, on which the pearls of this fascinating science are strung. Facts, which before were distinct and solitary, now are seen to be naturally allied; they easily fix themselves in the memory. They arrange themselves in lines, which, without effort, we survey at a distance. Before the adoption of this theory, the young student of botany felt as if he were wandering in a labyrinth. The objects were new and beautiful, but confused and bewildering. There were guide-boards which he could not read, and paths which led, he knew not whither. Under the guidance of this theory, he walks as through a garden. He sees his way clearly before him, and vistas open to charming prospects on every side; and, when he has reached the end, he finds himself on an elevation, from which he looks back upon his whole course, and traces every winding and every irregularity in his path.

The chapter on the food and nutrition of plants, is full of suggestions of the greatest practical importance. The delicate analysis of the chemist has shown the essential constituents of all plants. These are carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen. Another element, nitrogen, though not obtained from the analysis of the tissue of plants, is always present in growing organs, and is an essential constituent of a large number of vegetable products. Various mineral substances, alkaline, saline, and siliceous, are invariably found in the ashes of certain plants and products of plants. They must be derived from the air or the soil, and they must be introduced into the plant dissolved in water. The ingredients of a soil must, therefore, be soluble, otherwise it will be barren; and something must be mixed with the soil, to render them soluble. The universal food of plants is water, holding in solution always carbonic acid, which it derives from the atmosphere, and nitrogen, either simple or in the form of ammonia, and sometimes the alkaline and earthy salts, which it derives from the soil. By the analysis of the ashes, it is found, that different plants, a pea, a bean, and a stalk of wheat, for example, abstract from the soil alkali, as well as silex, in very different proportions.

"If they be allowed to produce fruit and ripen their seeds, the latter will be found to contain, in the wheat, a considerable

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

quantity of phosphate of magnesia, &c., but in the pea and bean scarcely any. It is therefore apparent, that, while a crop of wheat robs the soil of certain alkaline and other inorganic matters necessary to its proper growth, peas and beans leave these substances almost untouched. This explains the utility of the latter, as fallow crops, since they add to the land a portion of the carbonaceous matter they have derived chiefly from the air, while they scarcely diminish its alkalies and phosphates, which are required for the succeeding wheat crop. These alkaline and other constituents of the soil, it may here be remarked, are derived from the slow disintegration and decomposition of the rocks and earths that compose it, or are added in the form of manure.

"The amount or proportion, as well as the kind of earthy matter, is nearly constant in the same species, when grown in widely different soils; provided, that the substances which the plant requires are present in the soil at all. When this is not the case, its growth is checked, or it fails to ripen its fruit or form its peculiar products, and eventually perishes. One alkaline base may, however, sometimes take the place of another; as when a plant, which requires potash or magnesia, supplies itself with soda or lime, when the former is not accessible.

"It being, therefore, indispensable that a plant should find in the soil the mineral matters necessary to its growth or perfect developement, we are enabled to understand, why various species will only flourish in particular soils or situations; why plants which take up common salt, &c., are restricted to the seashore and to the vicinity of salt-springs; and why pines and firs, the ashes of which contain very little alkali, will thrive in the thinnest and most sterile soil, while the beech, maple, elm, &c., abounding with potash, are only found in strong and fertile land. These facts constitute the basis of the whole theory of manures; which consists in supplying artificially to the soil, the elements, which the particular plant in cultivation especially requires." — pp. 70, 71.

Nitrogen is an essential constituent of many seeds, particularly of those grasses, which are cultivated for grain. Those manures which furnish ammonia abundantly are, therefore, the most proper for these most important cultivated plants.*

* A striking instance of the light thrown on the processes of agriculture by the investigations of the chemist, is given in a late excellent "Address before the Massachusetts Horticultural Society," by their accomplished Secretary. See pp. 14, 15.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The essential elements are formed, in plants, into gum, starch, and sugar, which have each precisely the same constitution as sap; and, what is still more striking, the substance of which the cells, the vessels, and the woody fibre of plants consists is composed of the same constituents, in the very same proportions.

But to mention the curious and useful facts presented in this chapter would be to quote the whole of it. The subject has not, to our knowledge, been before presented to the English reader in a form so clear and at the same time so concise.

The reproach has often been cast upon parts of natural science, and upon botany among the rest, that it teaches only names, and is mere barren and unprofitable speculation. The present state of botany, as exhibited by this volume, takes away this reproach. It is full of practical results. The observations and reasonings of students of nature have been long and gradually maturing. They at last bear fruit. Such has been, so many times, the course of philosophy, that we shall not be surprised, if, at no very distant day, the faint murmurings of the discontented and distrustful objectors shall altogether cease.

When Franklin was first raising his kite to the clouds, it was natural that boys and boyish men should laugh at him. When he protected the habitation of man from the thunderbolt of heaven, even philosophers were filled with astonishment. And he, who had disarmed the thunder, won respect for himself and his country in the two first courts of Europe. When Jansen amused himself and his children in fitting spectacle glasses to tubes, the children, and even he, thought it was only very pleasant sport. When Galileo, by his newly invented telescope, suggested by the play of Jansen's children, pointed out a mode of calculating the longitude, the merchants of Florence must have looked upon the matter as something for men to think of; and Cardinal Frederic Borromeo must have humbly rejoiced at the prospect of feeding his starving poor, in a future season of scarcity, with wheat from distant lands.

A peculiar distinction of the natural system is the importance which it attaches to whatever relates to the embryo. This is a direct consequence of the matured views of the nature of the embryo, and of the fact that it possesses, "in a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rudimentary or undeveloped state, all the essential organs of vegetation, namely, a root, stem, and leaves."

The nature of the plant is, in a measure, predicted in the embryo; and it is found, that distinctions, drawn from an examination of this important organ, lead to great divisions in plants, which are confirmed by their whole aspect, habit, structure, and growth; and almost uniformly coincide with the divisions which are made by the common observation of mankind, and are indicated by their language. The embryos which are furnished with two cotyledons, or rudimentary leaves, expand these two leaves on the surface in the just-risen plant, with the plumule or growing point between them, as is the case with most plants common in our climate. Those that have one cotyledon, leave that below the surface, and send up one leaf formed of the plumule, as we see in maize and wheat. While the dodder, which has no leaves at all, is distinguished for having an embryo without a cotyledon; and, in this instance, the spiral embryo seems to foreshow the climbing habit of the plant.

The object of the second part of the work is the examination of the systems, by which plants are conveniently distinguished and arranged, particularly of the two most important ones, the artificial system of Linnæus, and the natural system.

"The object proposed by the natural system of botany, is to bring together into groups those plants which most nearly resemble each other, not in a single and perhaps unimportant point (as in an artificial classification), but in all essential particulars; and to combine the subordinate groups into larger natural assemblages, and these into still more comprehensive divisions, so as to embrace the whole vegetable kingdom in a methodical arrangement. All the characters which plants present, that is, all the points of agreement or difference, are employed in their classification; those which are common to the greatest number of plants being used for the primary grand divisions; those less comprehensive for subordinate groups, &c.; so that the *character* or description of each group, when fully given, actually expresses all the known particulars in which the plants it embraces agree among themselves, and differ from other groups of the same rank. This complete analysis being carried through the system, from the primary divisions down to the species, it is evident that the study of a single plant of each group will give a correct (so far as it goes) and often a sufficient idea of the struc-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ture, habits, and even the sensible properties of the whole."—p. 191.

In the opinion of those best acquainted with it, botany has now reached the state when a natural system may be employed by the learner, for the purpose of finding out, first, the names, and secondly, from them the properties of plants, and their natural affinities. The two things are completely distinct. No one, who knows any thing of the natural system, can for a moment doubt, that it offers the only satisfactory mode of accomplishing the last of those two objects. But as to its being fitted to accomplish the first, so fully and easily as the artificial system has done it, we must, for the present, be allowed to entertain doubts. We are among those thousands, who, with no other help than Bigelow's "Florula," have, almost always without difficulty, found out the names of most of the common plants of New England. Why should a system, which has been so convenient and so useful, be suddenly discarded? Dr. Gray places the matter in its proper light when he says,

"The immortal Linnæus, finding it impossible in his day to characterize the natural groups which his practised eye detected, proposed as a temporary substitute, the elegant artificial scheme which bears his name. As this system is identified with the history of the science, which, in its time, it so greatly promoted, and as most systematic works have until recently been arranged upon its plan, it is still necessary for the student to understand it."

And why not to use it? A beginner is just as ignorant of botany now, as he could have been in the time of Linnæus. Just as much now, as then, he wants, first of all, to know the name of a plant; and he wants to find it out in the easiest way possible. The accomplished botanist may, without inconvenience, dispense with the Linnæan system. The fortunate few who have access to a botanic garden, a rich herbarium, books of figures, and the aid of a learned teacher, like Dr. Gray, may easily dispense with it. But how is it with the multitude of lovers of nature, scattered in the small villages, among the woods and hills, throughout the land; who have little leisure, who can afford but a single book, who can have no means of dissection, and know not an individual to tell them the name of a wild flower? To such, Torrey and Gray's admirable "Flora" is utterly unintelligible.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

While thousands of such have derived unmeasured delight from the scanty knowledge they have gained, by the help of Bigelow, from an acquaintance, however slight, which they have formed with the vegetable denizens of a limited region around them. It is true, that from the artificial system they get no very great knowledge of affinities and properties, and but little of structure. They are only put in a state to receive with avidity this kind of knowledge. But it is not true, that a person who is familiar with the names, habits, and appearances of five hundred plants, however he may have learned them, is altogether ignorant of botany. He must have a very considerable acquaintance with the very characteristics which Robert Brown himself would have to notice, to enable him to distinguish the same plants. Why not, then, continue to employ, for the benefit of the great mass of the ignorant, a mode of finding the name which has answered this purpose so admirably well ?

We have no doubt, that an introduction to the natural system can be framed, which may take the place of the artificial. The beautiful "Flore Française" of Decandolle proves that it can. But we greatly doubt, whether even that answers the purpose so perfectly as the Linnæan system. We know not how it may be, but we doubt, whether it is as common in France for farmers' sons and village school-mistresses, with no education but that of the common schools, to have picked up a knowledge of botany, as we know it is for the same sort of persons in New England.

Such an introduction, however, may be made; and, if any one can make it, it is the author of the "Botanical Text-Book." Hitherto, it has not, so far as we know, been done in the English language. The artificial analysis in Lindley's "Introduction" makes but a distant approach to it. The "Artificial Table," at the end of Lindley's "Ladies' Botany," comes nearer, but is by no means full enough. Indeed, the plan of that work did not require it. Of late we hear, that Hooker's "English Flora" has assumed a new form. The staunch Linnæan has at length yielded, it seems. We shall look anxiously for new evidence of the feasibility of the project; for, with all our old and warm prejudices in favor of the Linnæan arrangement, in a Flora for daily and common use, we shall heartily rejoice to be assured, that it can give place to something better.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We intended to examine somewhat fully the second part of the "Botanical Text-Book," but we have not space. We can only say, that it is carefully and skilfully done, and that about one third of the orders, the more important or more difficult ones, are illustrated by neat, well-designed and well-executed figures from wood engravings. We had thought of much to say of the value of the work to the gardener and farmer, the teacher, and the general student. But for all these we must refer to the work itself. We cannot avoid indulging the hope, that it is destined to be the means of introducing to the lovers of nature amongst us, a higher and more philosophical form of the now noble science of botany. The prevailing conceptions of it have been wholly inadequate. It has, in consequence of the almost exclusive use of the Linnæan method, been considered as little more than a mode of getting at the names of plants. This book puts within the reach of thousands the enlarged views and vast and exact knowledge of the Jussieus, of Linnæus, of Richard, Decandolle, and Robert Brown, men who deserve to be known to common fame, as among the greatest observers and most original thinkers of the last hundred years.

We congratulate the friends of natural science upon the election of a person of so much zeal and ability as this book discovers, to the chair of botany in the University of Cambridge. We still more warmly congratulate the Professor himself, at being able, at his age, and with his tastes, to devote his time, attainments, and powers to such pursuits. The position offers enviable advantages to the votary of this delightful science. France, England, and Germany, with their strongly marked peculiarities and their deep researches, lend him all their aid. He has no national jealousies to prevent him from receiving whatever they can offer. He stands on the edge of a wilderness almost unexplored. Nature here assumes new shapes. No province of the mighty realm is fully conquered. Like Cæsar, he can command the veterans of the old world. More fortunate than Alexander, he has a new world offered to his victorious arms.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ART. IX. — *A Manual of Gold and Silver Coins of all Nations, struck within the Past Century; showing their History and legal Basis, and their actual Weight, Fineness, and Value, chiefly from original and recent Assays; with which are incorporated Treatises on Bullion and Plate, Counterfeit Coins, Specific Gravity of Precious Metals, etc., with recent Statistics of the Production and Coinage of Gold and Silver in the World, and Sundry useful Tables.* By JACOB R. ECKFELDT, and WILLIAM E. DU BOIS, Assayers of the Mint of the United States. *Illustrated by numerous Engravings of Coins, executed by the Medal-ruling Machine, and under the Direction, of* JOSEPH SAXTON, of the United States Mint. Published at the Assay Office of the Mint. Philadelphia. 1842. 4to. pp. 220.

WE have not at this time space sufficient to do full justice to this very useful and beautiful book. The subject of coinage is interesting to two classes of individuals in every community. One of them consists of the few, who are curious to study coins historically from the earliest period, and who generally seek to make collections for their amusement, as well as instruction. The other and much larger class, is made up of practical men, who have occasion to handle the money of various nations, and to whom it is therefore of some consequence to be well informed of the various changes in external character, or intrinsic value, through which it is perpetually passing. In the United States there is as yet a very small number of persons, who feel either able or willing to make cabinets, though we have reason to know it to be increasing. On the other hand, the discredit into which the paper currency has been thrown, by events familiarly known to all, has had the effect rapidly to enlarge the class of people who prefer a strong-box to a bank for the safe-keeping of their coin. To each of these descriptions of persons, this work must be welcome. It professes to treat of the coinage of the world for a century past, but is most satisfactory as a supplement for the last twenty years, to the manuals issued before that time in the older countries of Europe. "Since the opening of the nineteenth century," we are told, in the introduction, "France has given the first standard of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

this sort, England has supplied the second; and a third is now offered from the United States." We are very glad, that the contribution on our part is one of which we have no cause to be ashamed in any way that a comparison may be instituted.

It is usual, in considering the subject of the currency, to contrast the coin, which is made out of the precious metals, and the bills, which consist of stamped paper, as if the two had nothing in common. Yet no individual, who has followed the history of coinage, can fail to observe, that, after all, they rest upon the same common basis of credit, and that almost as many tricks have been played upon the public credulity through the medium of hard money, as were ever put in practice with mere promises. The subject is fruitful, and some time or other we hope to have an opportunity to go into it at large. In China, perhaps the oldest civilized country in the world, it would appear as if the whole circle of experiments upon currency had been run through, and they had all equally failed. A silver dollar, that has had the fortune to pass from hand to hand, for any length of time in that country, will be inevitably curtailed of its fair proportions, and will show in the many minute stamps, which riddle it like a sieve, that some other test is required of its value than the inscription on its face. There is no coinage peculiar to China, excepting the brass pieces strung together by the hundred, eight hundred of which may perhaps be worth a silver dollar. To the highly sharpened perspicacity of the traders of that country, that is not silver which only glitters. The steelyard, and the crucible, form the only kind of national mint in which they put any confidence.

It is by no means clear, that the other nations of the world, in proportion as their knaves and rogues overtake in skill their prototypes in China, will not be ultimately reduced to the same expedient, that has been there adopted. And our merchants, too, may likewise in progress of time be obliged to consider a set of scales as an indispensable part of their daily dress. It is but a few months since the practice of *sweating* sovereigns in Great Britain, forced its government to undertake the enormous loss of re-coining, long before the old coinage was worn out. But sweating is only one ingenious device, that has succeeded many others in the history of English coins. We think it is already made tolerably certain,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that the same necessity will impose the same burden upon the British government at least as often as once in twenty years. Gold is so valuable, that no confidence can be placed in the correspondence between the stamp on a coin, and its worth, which is not frequently supported by trying its weight.

Then there is the danger of counterfeits, which are known, through specimens still remaining, to have circulated as long ago as in the times of ancient Rome. How nicely these can be made to deceive the senses, is well explained in the chapter upon that subject in the volume before us. Four or five hundred persons are annually convicted in Great Britain of this single crime, and the only reason why it is not equally common with us, is, that, whatever may be the intention of our legislation upon the subject, we have not now, and never have had, a currency consisting of the precious metals, especially of gold, which is best worth the labor of counterfeiting. It is easier to follow the fashion of the country, and manufacture paper, often quite equal in value to the genuine article it was made to imitate. But if the labors of some of our public men should prove successful in getting rid of this evil, the only effect will be to turn the ingenuity of a large class of industrious persons into a new channel, even more injurious to the community.

Thus far we have alluded only to the dangers to a metallic currency, that flow from sources unconnected with the government that authorizes it. But there are evils of no trifling magnitude, which often originate with the power that directs the mint itself. This book tells us, "that there are realms where the operations of this institution are state secrets." In these the relative quantity of alloy to precious metal may depend upon the necessities or the mental obtuseness of the sovereign, rather than upon any rule of honesty, or even of political economy. The French history is full of arbitrary and sudden changes in the value of the money of account. The Bank of Amsterdam originated in the intolerable evils growing out of a debased metallic currency in the various states of Germany and Holland. Charles the Twelfth of Sweden stamped copper dollars to pay his troops with. And, some of the independent States of South America have been recently playing tricks of a similar kind, more dangerous, perhaps, because not so bare-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

faced. The decline and fall of the Roman Empire is as visible in the adulteration of her coinage as in the brilliant narrative of Gibbon. Who then can say, that credit is not an ingredient in the currency given to the precious metals when coined? And, even if we were to go back to the proposed gold bars of Mr. Ricardo, we should still be obliged to put some reliance upon the stamp that is to declare their purity. Otherwise we should either be exposed to the losses which come from alloying, pickling, or plating, as described in the present volume, or else be driven to the necessity of ourselves employing chemical tests in every instance in which we receive a bar.

Notwithstanding all this, we must beg leave to declare ourselves bullionists as it regards currency. And we should, for more reasons than one, be sorry to have the practice of stamping coins discontinued. They are an eloquent, though dumb, expositor of the vicissitudes of this world, even in its highest stations. And there is an elegance in the art, which to us is highly fascinating. Perhaps the portion of the present work which is most valuable, is that which treats of the coinage of the new South American republics; but it suggests to us few agreeable or consolatory associations. The most interesting coinage in the history of the world, notwithstanding the inferiority of the mechanical process then in use, is the series of Roman coins. The least so is our own. The reason of this is, that our dies present no variety of stamp or of inscription, neither historical record nor interesting association. We perceive that Mr. Hawkins, in his late work upon the British silver coinage, laments the baldness of the devices used in that kingdom; but even they are not so poor as ours. We go so far as to regret the almost nervous dread of monarchical attributes, which induced Washington to order the dies prepared with his head to be laid aside. But these are feelings in which we shall not be very extensively joined by those who study "the almighty dollar" with very different emotions from ours, and we shall therefore hasten to put an end to our dissertation.

No book upon coins is worth much without the aid of plates. The present volume is richly supplied with excellent ones. We have taken the pains to compare them with real specimens, and find the copy very accurate. Indeed,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

how could it be otherwise, under the new and original plan which was adopted to obtain them? The chapter, explaining the manner in which the three discoveries of the present age, the Daguerrotype, electrotype, and machine-engraving have been made to subserve the present design, is among the most interesting in the book. We take leave of it, regretting only that our limits prevent us from furnishing extracts from it; and cheerfully recommend it as a very handsome production, and, considering the costliness of its preparation, furnished at a very reasonable price.

ART. X. — *American Notes for General Circulation.* By CHARLES DICKENS. In Two Volumes. London: Chapman & Hall, 186, Strand. 1842. 12mo. pp. 308 and 306.

A FEW years ago, a series of papers appeared in the "London Morning Chronicle," descriptive of London Life, Manners, and Character, under the signature of "Boz." These sketches attracted some attention at the time, by their cleverness, and their racy, lively style. Inquiries were occasionally made into their authorship; but nobody, at least on this side of the Atlantic, seemed able to tell us any thing about it. They had their run in the columns of the Chronicle, and were likely to find their tomb there also; but, soon afterward, the first number of the "Pickwick Papers" came out, purporting to be edited by the same lively Boz. This new work instantly and forcibly arrested the attention of the public, and the succeeding numbers were looked for with an eagerness which has been equalled only on the appearance of the same author's subsequent works. Fresh inquiries were made, who this new and remarkable writer could possibly be; and the name of Charles Dickens, a young man hitherto all unknown to fame, with nothing to aid him in circumstances or situation, in ancestral rank or family wealth, started into a celebrity, which, for extent and intensity, for its extraordinary influence upon social feelings and even political institutions, and for the strength of favorable regard and even warm personal attachment by which it has been accompanied all over the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

world, we believe is without a parallel in the history of letters. The demand for the "Pickwick Papers" grew greater and greater with every succeeding number. English gentlemen, travelling on the Continent, left orders to have them forwarded to their address. At home, everybody, who could afford his monthly shilling, hurried to pay it on the morning of the publishing day; and, with an adroitness for money-making, commonly supposed to mark the American only, speculating boys let out their copies, to those who could not afford to buy, at a penny an hour.

Among readers in the United States, the eagerness to get these papers was to the full as general and intense. They were republished in every form of newspaper, weekly and monthly journal, and close-printed volume; the incessant industry of the metropolitan presses proved hardly equal to supplying the country demand; and, long before the adventures of Mr. Pickwick were brought to a conclusion, the name of Charles Dickens was not only a classical name in English literature, but one ever after to be spoken with an affectionate warmth, of higher value than the widest lettered renown. Each succeeding work only deepened the impression of the author's genius and gentle heart; each new character, that sprung from his fertile and felicitous invention, only widened the range of sympathy between him and a circle of readers, that embraced nearly every reader of the English tongue. Nor was his fame an English and American reputation solely. His works were speedily translated into all the living languages of Europe. His wit, humor, and pathos are as well known in Germany, France, Italy, and even in Russia, as they are at home; and we learn from the late European papers, that even the solemn Turk has forsworn his national gravity, and been compelled to give way to the most un-Mahometan roars of laughter over the witticisms of Mr. Samuel Weller. This immense reputation, and this more than imperial power over the hearts and minds of men, be it remembered, had been gained by one whose genius was still in the dewy freshness of youth; for Mr. Dickens's thirtieth birthday occurred during his recent visit to the United States.

We had heard intelligent Englishmen express much surprise at the American popularity of Mr. Dickens. They supposed his works were too national in spirit and tendency,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

too local in their wit and allusions, to be fully enjoyed anywhere out of England ; and, when they found that his American readers far outnumbered his English, because his works were more widely and cheaply circulated here than at home, they were astonished at so startling and unexpected a fact. The truth is, that Mr. Dickens's peculiar genius is nearly as well understood here as it is in London. We are of English origin, and the chief peculiarities of the English character are reproduced with some modifications in our own. English literature, the representative of the English character, speaks to us in no foreign tongue requiring interpreters and commentators ; but in a language, native not only to the American ear, but breathing a spirit kindred and congenial to the American mind. It was to be expected, therefore, that a series of English works, drawn from the actual life of the present age, throbbing, so to speak, with the life-blood of the English heart, should find an answering throb in the great heart of America. But, setting all these considerations aside, there is that in the writings of so genial an author as Dickens, which sends their influence far beyond all boundary lines of nation or race ; a brightness which no difference of association can materially darken ; a spirit which it requires no artificial preparation to feel ; a clearness and transparency of thought and expression by which his conceptions are laid open at once to the understandings of all readers. The creations of fiction, if they have the vitality of genius, do not depend for their effect upon the previous knowledge of the reader, so much as upon their harmony with the common principles of human nature. Genuine wit may use local or temporary relations as its occasion ; but it has an essence which is immortal. The wit of Falstaff takes a form which only the peculiarities of the Elizabethan age could have lent it ; but it is no less wit at the present day ; it is no less felt in its spirit by English, American, and German readers. Who imagines, that such a book as Don Quixote could be written now ? And who can spare Don Quixote from the resources he is to draw upon in his leisure hours ? Who thinks he cannot understand that immortal book, because it is the work of a Spaniard, and dates far back in another age ? Is the pungent satire, the infinite drollery, the never-failing, ever-brilliant wit of Aristophanes lost, because he wrote for the theatre of an ancient republic, and in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a language we have to learn, slowly and painfully, at school and college? Not at all. His Strepsiades and Phidippides, his Cleon and Demos, his politic Knights and usurping women, his quips and quirks, his puns, burlesques, and travesties, his humorous exaggerations and his pointed, stinging sarcasm, are nearly as well known, and as heartily enjoyed by the modern scholar in his study, as they were by the hearer four and twenty hundred years ago.

Still more is this the case with the representation of sorrow. Man is born to sorrow, and, wherever it is truly expressed, it reaches his understanding and moves his heart. The language of mourning carries its meaning straight and unambiguous to the soul. The parting of Hector and Andromache is as deeply pathetic to-day, as it was at the dawn of Grecian poetry. The heart-rending speech of ancient Priam to the slayer of his son borrows nothing of its sad power from the peculiar circumstances of the age, when the greatest of poets conceived and uttered it; it is the voice of nature giving speech to the agonies of a human heart; and wherever a human heart exists, there is an echo found to those wailing tones, though they come from ancient days. And, from that moving scene, down to the death of little Nell, the sound of mourning has been heard in human dwellings, and repeated in the songs of the poet and the page of the romancer. But, to be laid up in the memories of men, the expression of sorrow by the poet or the romancer must proceed from a heart, that deeply feels for human woe, and a mind capable of representing it with skill and truth. Like the great masters of emotion, whose works have come down to us, Dickens writes from no mere intellectual conception of human suffering, but from a profound sense of the woes of men, and a living sympathy with them. Thus, the graver, as well as the humorous, parts of his writings are read with an eager admiration in every country of the civilized world.

It is not our purpose, in the present paper, to go into a minute examination of the works of Dickens, or to attempt the very superfluous task of recommending them to the readers of this journal. The applause of the world needs no aid from periodical criticism; the favorite of two hemispheres can neither be benefited nor harmed by any thing the literary journals can say of him. But we think it proper

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to take advantage of the present pause in the literary career of Mr. Dickens, to recall the impressions his works have made upon us, and to form for ourselves a fair appreciation of his genius. When he has once begun again, there will be no breathing-time. The reading world will be reading the number last arrived, or watching, with absorbing interest and immeasurable impatience, the arrival of the next. It will be once more, as it was in the days of "Pickwick," "Oliver Twist," "Nicholas Nickleby," the "Old Curiosity Shop," and "Barnaby Rudge." Whoever wishes to make up a deliberate opinion must do it now, while the author is gathering fresh strength upon the bosom of his native earth.

It often happens, that literary reputations, suddenly acquired, are as suddenly lost. Literary history records many examples of the capriciousness of the world with regard to the fame of authors. The favorite of one age is wholly unknown, or scorned and contemned, by another. Warned by such lessons, we are apt to look with doubtful eye upon the celebrities of the present day, and to think, that they, too, are destined to pass away and be forgotten. But such conclusions are not to be hastily drawn. The author, who merely reflects the manners of his age; the poet, who catches only the whimsical mannerism of the moment, who studies chiefly the effects of exaggerated conceits, or unusual and distorted language, cannot expect to live beyond the time allotted for transient styles of thought and expression. But the man of genius, who throws himself into the broad current of human sympathies, and, studying to utter his thoughts in language drawn from the great treasury of his mother tongue, and not from the paltry cant of sects and coteries, sets before his contemporaries vivid delineations of their daily life, and speaks to them in manly tones of their duties to each other, and teaches them, that the poorest outcast, the most abject and friendless being, that ever passed through want and beggary to an unhonored grave, is still one of the universal brotherhood of man, as much as the haughtiest in the land; such a man of genius will not only be welcomed by the love and admiration of those among whom he lives and moves, but coming times will not willingly let his memory die. Present popularity cheers him in his labors, and fame in after ages crowns his name. He is followed through life with love, and nations

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

enshrine him when dead, as a friend and benefactor of the race. Such an author, unless we have read him wrong, is Charles Dickens. We have no apprehensions, that time will materially diminish his fame.

As a mere creator of characters, Mr. Dickens stands pre-eminent among English authors of the present age. The whole reading world is perfectly familiar with the persons, voices, manners of Mr. Pickwick, Sam Weller, and the other members of that immortal company. Their adventures are not merely the materials of amusing stories, but the exhibitions of living and breathing characters. Mr. Pickwick is as little likely to be forgotten, as any personage in Shakspeare. The Wellers have each as marked an individuality, as any person whom we know in daily life. Mr. Winkle, Mr. Snodgrass, and Mr. Tupman are less clearly drawn, but no one doubts their real existence. Who has not seen the fat boy? Who has not shaken hands with hearty Mr. Wardle? Who has not tasted, in imagination at least, that cold punch, which sent Mr. Pickwick asleep to the pound? Who has not listened to the case of Bardell *versus* Pickwick, and seen that professional badgering of witnesses, which reduced Mr. Winkle to despair, but was wholly ineffectual with the imperturbable Mr. Samuel Weller? The eloquence of Mr. Buzfuz has its parallel wherever legal eloquence is cultivated, and the frisky manners of busy little Mr. Perker may be seen any day in Court Street. Who has not been in the Den of Mrs. Leo Hunter, and who has not read, again and again, the tremendous controversies of the rival editors of Eatanswill?

Mr. Dickens's wit and humor are so abundant, that most people hardly think of the more serious aspects of his genius. He has an inexhaustible vein of the pleasantest exaggeration, which keeps his readers either roaring with laughter, or getting ready to roar. He is constantly surprising us with the most unexpected turns, which the solemnity of a stoic could not stand against. Whimsical peculiarities of scenes or persons are so constantly presented in an amusing light, that the grimmest scorner of mirth and frolic cannot choose but surrender at discretion. A single expression, even a word, is often so charged with drollery, that, before it is fairly read, the reader and the hearer (if there be one) are thrown into convulsions. We have known people, who are

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

utterly overcome by seeing even the covers of Pickwick, and could no more help shouting with laughter, though their very lives depended on preserving silence, than they could make the sun to stand still at a word. This abundant wit is all of the right kind. Puns and unnatural distortions of words are rarely found in his books. Strange but striking comparisons, a sudden bringing together of opposite ideas, exact delineation of comical character, happy narration of comic incident, and pleasant exaggeration, are the materials out of which he has woven ten thousand witty passages, which will be read with delight, as long as wit is understood, as long as men are men.

But, as we said before, the very abundance of this excellent quality withdraws people's attention from the more serous parts of this author's writings. Comedy is more generally liked than tragedy. A joke is suited to all capacities, and the readers of popular literature like better to be amused, than to have their feelings wrought upon by the pathetic representation of scenes of woe.

The very name of Boz suggests a thousand comical traits, and he is generally regarded as chiefly to be praised for wit and humor. This is far enough from being the case. Dickens is an original poet. Many of his characters are drawn with earnestness and enthusiasm. He has sounded the depths of the human heart, as well as skimmed over its surface. The vigilance of his eye, no beauty of nature and no form of human passion escapes. Scattered all over his works, especially his later ones, are the most exquisite delineation of the outward world, in language prosaic in form, but wonderfully poetical in spirit. English country life and scenery never were painted with more felicity than they have been by Dickens. With what ready skill does he seize upon the more unobtrusive beauties, the little cabinet scenes, so to speak, which open here and there in the world over which the creatures of his genius move, and, by a few masterly touches, present them visibly before us, lending beauty and grace to the varied picture of life. Like Shakspeare, he knows well how to throw in a few gentle traits to soften the terrors of his tragic passages, by lingering on which the mind relieves its overwrought feelings. He looks into the condition of the poor, and he sees that they have their humble joys as well as sorrows, and these he

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

paints in brighter colors than they have ever been painted in before. He is sometimes called the delineator of low life; he should rather be called the delineator of human life. But there is truth too in the former appellation. For no writer has so truly set forth the virtues, temptations, sufferings, and characters of the lower and poorer classes, as he.

But his walk is not confined to this region of humanity. Though he rarely draws from what is called fashionable society the materials of his stories, and has never written any thing that can be classed among the fashionable novels, many of his characters move in the educated classes; nor do we perceive, that his hand is less vigorous in these delineations, than in the characters of low life. The noble spendthrift, and the fashionable blackleg, are well hit off in Lord Frederic Verisopht and Sir Mulberry Hawk. The struggles of the educated, high-principled, but pennyless young man, and his rise to affluence by honorable industry, are beautifully presented in Nicholas Nickleby. Where was ever drawn, by poet's hand, a fairer picture of womanly sweetness, gentleness, and refinement than Rose Manlie? Where is a more delightful creation than Oliver Twist? A boy of natural refinement and delicate organization; born of gentle lineage, though the offspring of guilty passion; left an infant orphan in the workhouse, under the tender mercies of a parish beadle; in daily contact with all that is degrading in extreme poverty, and crushing in petty tyranny; with the haggard sights of want and woe, and pauper vice, surrounding him like grim phantoms from the first moment of his life; then in Fagin's robber's den, the companion of thieves, highwaymen, and prostitutes; he passes through them all, unsoiled and pure, protected by a native spirit of goodness, that, like a guardian angel, seems at times to shelter the young and helpless from contamination and ruin. Never was the triumph of innocence portrayed with greater beauty, or a truer and manlier sympathy. Doubtless it would be hard to find in common life an exact counterpart to Oliver Twist. It is not often that the young spirit can throw aside the evil influences by which in early life it is surrounded. But such things sometimes happen. In the wretched dwellings of want and woe, a child of fine, ethereal temper may be seen, bearing uncomplainingly his bitter lot, ministering with patient heart and serene countenance to the needs of a father,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whose profligacy and crime have laid him on the bed of death or of a mother, whom the tempting devil of strong drink has robbed of every gentle attribute, and made a demon of. Such a spectacle, though a rare one, is by no means an unknown sight. In the hand of a master of the human heart like Dickens, this would be the germ of a character, like that of Oliver Twist. The idea, though often partially apprehended, has never before been carried out with such marvellous skill and pathos.

The character of Little Nell, is by universal consent placed among the loveliest creations of genius. In some respects it is the pendant of Oliver. The one reminds us of the other. Yet each has a striking individuality ; each character has an independent existence ; each is a creation of finished and exquisite art. Little Nell is the favorite child of the author's genius. On her he seems to have lavished the richest powers of his mind, and the deepest affections of his heart. Her course, through the trying and agitating scenes of her short and spotless life, he saw from the beginning with certain eye, and traced with unerring hand. He seems to have watched her with real, heartfelt solicitude ; he certainly gave to her little adventures, and her mighty sorrows, and her heroic endurance a living reality, which month after month deepened the sympathies, and held at their highest tension the feelings, of the whole reading world. Her death is perhaps the most pathetic scene in the literature of the age. Nothing has so profoundly stirred the world's great heart for many years.

A peculiarity of Dickens's writings, which has often been dwelt upon with praise and pleasure, is their freedom from expressions and allusions which offend a fastidious delicacy. Considering the regions of life where many of his scenes are laid, this is a most remarkable fact. He loses by it nothing that is racy or striking. So sure is the felicitous instinct of his genius, that he presents each scene and circumstance in its happiest aspect ; he draws each group, and places every figure, in its most characteristic action and attitude, and never for an instant forgets what is due to the nicest sense of propriety. He gains immeasurably by this delicate dealing with his materials. The creations of his genius are thereby in themselves rendered more beautiful, and they find their way to minds which would shrink with disgust from works of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

equal genius, tainted with vulgarity and vice ; and then they spread a blessed influence over society, by purifying the passions, which, according to the great critic of the ancient world, is the proper object of tragedy.

Another striking peculiarity of Dickens's works is their practical moral aim. They are not constructed merely upon certain abstract principles of art, with no reference to the condition of men. They are the outpourings of a heart, that feels deeply all that belongs to the race ; of a mind, that sees clearly the wrongs and sufferings under which half mankind are bowed down. Dickens sees the right, and, in all his works, holds it steadily in view. Besides the beauty breathed over his more serious writings by an imagination of extraordinary brilliancy and power, we feel they have the more mysterious beauty of a generous and disinterested spirit, which claims kindred with every human heart. They are, to borrow Mr. Talfourd's strong expression, "mortised into the living rock of humanity," — and greatly has humanity been the gainer. The immediate effects of these works in England, for whose condition they are more especially adapted, are said to be extraordinary. Ancient abuses have been corrected ; dens of wickedness and tyranny and every base passion, the Dotheboy's Halls, have been broken up, the miseries of the starving poor have been told to ears, which they would never have reached, but for the mighty magic of his genius ; the sin of irredeemable vulgarity, which heretofore shut out the wants and the affections of humble life from the sphere of high-born sympathies, has been done away, and the native beauty of the human soul has been drawn from under the coarse disguises of want, hardship, and woe, and clothed with living light. These are great and noble ends for genius to have accomplished. These are worthy of the proudest ambition, the loftiest aspirations after fame. Dickens has thus powerfully coöperated with the great philanthropic movements which mark the present age. He has acted with incalculable effect upon the principles which the late Dr. Channing carried out so nobly in another form. His commanding eloquence enforced, with earnest didactic energy, the same regenerating truths that lie at the very heart of most of Dickens's creations. The impressive lessons of that great teacher, delivered in a style of solemn grandeur, that sometimes assumed almost the tone of pro-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

phecy, and the gay conceptions of "Boz," meet together in one common aim, — the doing justice to the wronged, the weak, and the sorrowing of the human family.

If the preceding remarks are not greatly erroneous, Mr. Dickens has already done what will immortalize his name. He has added to the number of original characters, many that will hold their place in English literature for ever. When we call to mind the number and variety of the personages he has introduced to our acquaintance within a few years, and the remarkable individuality which each possesses, and the manner in which we think of them and speak of them, as of living beings, long after the excitement of a first reading has gone by, we cannot fail to be astonished at the fertility of his creative power. Then he has added immeasurably to the sources of harmless enjoyment by the bright sallies of his exhaustless wit; and again, suddenly changing his hand, he has thrilled his readers by scenes of the deepest pathos that ever moved the human soul. All these qualities form an assemblage of claims upon the gratitude and admiration of men, such as is rarely presented in a single person; and we say, with unhesitating confidence, that on the strength of these claims, the name of Dickens will survive to after ages, with the greatest and best of England's manly and noble literature, to be spoken of ages hence, as now, with the loving admiration that awaits the great and good.

Mr. Dickens's English style is one of great originality and power. It is impossible not to wonder at the copiousness and variety of the English language. As an instrument of thought it has a wider compass, a mightier sweep, perhaps, than any other modern tongue. From the copious flow and splendid imagery of the eloquence of Burke, to the idiomatic ease of Addison, and the forcible plainness of Swift, what a range of phraseology, fitted to every shade of thought, to every peculiarity of genius! The classical taste, and severe intellectual training, of a large portion of the English authors, have given to the leading works in English literature an exquisite finish, that places them on a level with the immortal remains of Greece and Rome. Xenophon himself is scarcely more graceful and easy than Hume. Horace is not more select in his phraseology than Rogers; Juvenal is not more pointed than Johnson and Gifford. The golden thread of classical scholarship runs through the rich tissue of English

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

printed and spoken eloquence. But, besides these more select and stately portions of British literature, there is a vast body of original works, of a more popular cast, which are wholly and exclusively English in tone, spirit, allusions, and phraseology. Only men of classical education feel the force and beauty of a happy classical allusion, or of a skilful adaptation of an antique turn of thought. Such effects are limited to a comparatively small number in any country. How few are the readers and lovers of Burke, and Milton, compared to the great body of British and American readers, simply because the sphere of thought, allusion, and illustration, through which those mighty intellects moved, as in their native air, is wholly beyond the knowledge, and therefore beyond the sympathies, of the mass of men. But the literature of England is remarkable for supplying the intellectual wants of the mass of men with works of profound genius, and yet on a level with the capacities of the common mind ; popular in tone, drawn from the associations, feelings, thoughts of general life, yet pure, elegant, and eloquent in style ; modern in character, yet rivalling in all the excellences of composition the best works of antiquity.

Among this latter class we place the writings of Dickens. His command over the English language, in its most native and idiomatic parts, is really marvellous. His style is original, almost beyond that of any writer of English in this age. It is formed, not by the study of classical models, not by consuming the midnight oil in laboriously mastering the learning of books ; but it is caught from the lips of men, speaking under the influence of the passions in daily life. It is formed from the commonest materials, selected with an instinctive tact, and used with singular directness and force. It abounds in racy and expressive idioms, and has a strange flexibility in conveying at once to the reader's mind every variety of thought and passion. It may be said to be unstudied, though it must have required long habits of composition to bring it to its present state of completeness. What we mean is, that Mr. Dickens is one of those original thinkers, who look directly upon the objects of their thoughts, and express their views, feelings, or conceptions in the first words that come to hand, — those first words being almost always the best. He seems to be under no influence from other minds ; he rarely makes an allusion to others'

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

works; his style has none of the purple patches that varied scholarship is so apt to give to language, sometimes to the injury of its point and force; but, with a self-reliance, which rarely disappoints him, he marches forward to his aim; beautiful and brilliant thoughts spring spontaneous and abundant around his rapid pen; the stream of language flows at its own sweet will, and never runs low or threatens to fail; it changes, with a curious and natural felicity, from stirring narrative to witty dialogue; from keen satire, it softens easily to heart-moving pathos; it rises from shrewd observation, to vehement eloquence; and from homely but expressive prose, it ever and anon melts into the sweetest music. He draws his illustrations not from the great book of literature, but from the greater book of human life. His common-places are not taken from the classics, but from the soul of man. His descriptions of men and nature are the records, not of his reading, but of what he has seen in the thronged thoroughfares of the city, or the sweet solitudes of the country. His style, therefore, is strikingly original; original in the sense in which Homer is original, Shakspeare is original, Scott is original.

But, with all its excellences, Dickens's style is marred by several solecisms, which the writers of the last twenty years have admitt d into their works, and these he repeats again and again. The use of "directly" in the sense of "as soon as," is an abomination first made popular, though not first used, by Bulwer, and appearing more than a thousand times in Dickens's works. It is an irredeemable cockneyism, and as such never to be tolerated in good society. Several other expressions of this sort now and then occur, such as the new-fangled and most uncouth solecism, "is being done," for the good old English idiomatic expression "is doing," — an absurd periphrasis driving out a pointed and pithy turn of the English language. But these are hardly enough to injure seriously the character of his style, or to detract materially from its singular purity and grace.

Such are our impressions of the genius of Mr. Dickens; and thinking thus, and believing that the majority of American readers had pretty much the same views, we were not surprised at the enthusiasm with which his late arrival was hailed in the United States. Some few individuals, — as is always the case with popular excitements, — were disposed

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to sneer. But, when we consider the extraordinary influence that this young author had wielded; the beautiful humanity that everywhere breathed from his pages; the delicacy from which, in the wildest freaks of fun and frolic, he had never departed; the deep sympathy he had ever shown with the afflicted of his race; the exquisite creations which his genius had so lavishly poured out upon the world, and the years of enjoyment he had brought to every house in the land; we cannot help feeling that the universal enthusiasm with which he was welcomed was perfectly natural, and just what was to be expected from a generous people. True, the spectacle of a young man, without wealth or political influence, receiving such homage, was a novel one. Popular candidates for office, men in high station, presidents and those who hoped to be presidents, had often before, in their progresses through the country, received the plaudits of the multitude; bells had been rung, and vast quantities of villanous saltpetre had been burned to do them honor; and nobody thought these tumultuous proceedings censurable. But here was a youthful foreigner with nothing but God's gifts, — a great genius and a generous heart, — from whom no other benefit had been received or was to be expected, but the delight of reading his books, — and people rushed to receive him with open arms. To our apprehension the scene was beautiful and affecting. It did as much honor to the people as to the distinguished visiter. And, though many ludicrous incidents marked the popular enthusiasm; though ladies of cerulean hose tormented Dickens with their literary platitudes, and romantic maids begged for locks of hair, and moon-struck cab-men and hackney-coach drivers plucked bare the sleeves of his shaggy coat for keepsakes, and the managers of military balls insisted on his working the miracle of omnipresence, and the exhibitors of poor-houses and the like made long speeches when he visited them, which he had to answer; and though autographs were in such request, that Mr. and Mrs. Dickens, — as Hood humorously says, — had to keep hard at work some hours every morning to supply the demand; — still, on the whole, the reception was highly creditable to the feeling and good sense of the country.

Nothing could have been better conceived, or could have passed off better, than the Boston dinner; and the dinner at New York was what the newspapers call "a brilliant affair,"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to say nothing of that unique display, the great "Boz ball" in the theatre, which was followed by a public meeting, at the mayor's office, of those gentlemen, who had lost or exchanged cloaks and hats,—said to have been one of the largest and most respectable meetings ever held in that city. But, though it was natural for a generous and sensitive people to pay these honors, the receiver of them must often have been placed in scenes that required all his good sense and good humor to pass through with dignity. The trial, however, was borne with admirable presence of mind. We believe all who saw Mr. Dickens must have been struck with his singular freedom from the airs and assumptions of the literary lion, and charmed with the frankness, cordiality, and simplicity of his manners, and the prompt, lively, and brilliant character of his conversation. His speeches, on the occasions referred to, were, in point of style, sentiment, and delivery, among the best of their kind that it has ever been our fortune to hear; and proved, conclusively, that Dickens is not only a great original writer, but would make, should the vicissitudes of life ever throw him into a public career, a most efficient popular orator. We never heard a dinner-speech more enthusiastically applauded, than his very happy one delivered at New York. His eloquent allusions to Washington Irving, who presided, brought down a perfect tempest of cheers; and justly, for nothing of the kind was ever better done.

But, as every one knows, Mr. Dickens took occasion, while here, to urge publicly the adoption of an international copy-right law. All that he said was said with the utmost delicacy and propriety. Men might have differed from his opinions, or opposed his arguments; it is a question on which a diversity of sentiment doubtless exists. Literary property has never in any country received the full measure of legislative protection, which has been extended to property of other kinds; and just so long as the law looks upon it with a doubtful eye, just so long will men be found to deny its existence, or at least to dispute about its extent. We have no intention of discussing this question; the opinions of this journal have often been expressed, and the arguments we have used in their support have never been refuted. We allude to it now, merely to say, that we coincide entirely with the views so well expressed by Mr. Dickens, and approve the manner in which he urged them. The attacks made upon

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

him by a portion of the newspapers, for the course he saw fit to take on this subject, were unjust, false, virulent, and vulgar; discreditable to the taste and temper, and disgraceful to the character, of their authors. One of the most generous and disinterested of men, who had come to this country to seek, among a people by whom his genius was appreciated and admired, relaxation from long and severe intellectual toil, was charged with the meanest mercenary motives, merely because he had the independence to urge the claims of justice in behalf of literary men, in his public addresses; and, with an excess of impudence and falsehood hardly to be imagined, some newspaper scribblers had the baseness to declare, that Mr. Dickens's expenses were paid by the publishers and authors of England, and that he travelled merely as their hired agent. We refer to this disgusting display of vulgar malignity, merely to hold it up to the scorn of all honorable men connected with the press; to defend the character of Dickens from such poor attacks would be a work of supererogation indeed. We have good reason to think, that the large publishing houses of New York and Philadelphia are coming round to the support of an international copyright; and the chairman of the committee, which reported the famous Boston booksellers' memorial, arguing against a copyright law on the ground that it would prevent American editors of European works from altering them to suit the republican taste, has lately declared himself a friend of international copyright. And here we cannot help expressing our surprise, that the strange and dishonorable ground assumed in that memorial has not been more pointedly reprobated by the good sense and good principle of so reflecting a community as ours. We can only account for the adoption of such a document at all, by a body of respectable men, on the supposition, that its piratical doctrine respecting literary property escaped the notice of the convention, among the multitude of other matters which were therein discussed; for, in our view, the doctrine, to which those respectable gentlemen seemed to give their public support, was one to be maintained not in the company of honest men, but only in the society of footpads, housebreakers, and pickpockets.

Long before this, all American readers have read the "Notes for General Circulation." They have been scattered over the country by the penny press, with the speed of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rail-road and steam-boat. We believe they have been read with general approbation. Certainly they are pleasant reading, and highly characteristic of their author. Persons who expected from Dickens long disquisitions upon what are called American Institutions, — philosophical tirades upon the working of the republican machine of government, — or the future prospects of the world as affected by what we style the great experiment of self-government, — expected what they had no right to look for from the author of "Pickwick." Mr. Dickens had too much good sense to attempt a work for which he was unprepared by previous studies, habits of thought, and intellectual peculiarities; for which, had he possessed every needful prerequisite, his residence in the country was too short, and his opportunities of calm observation too limited and few. But he has a quick eye, from which nothing that comes within its range escapes; in his rapid passage from place to place, he would seize many characteristic points, and take in at a glance many amusing traits. Little incidents, that others would pass unnoticed, with him would be the germs of entertaining remark.

We had a right, therefore, to expect from him, not a didactic work, but a book full of graphic touches, good feeling, and pleasant observation; and in this expectation we have not been disappointed. Many of his strictures have given offence in various quarters. Some people seem to think, that if a fault of manners, or an inconvenience of social arrangements, or an awkward or disagreeable habit, is described by a traveller, it is described as something peculiar to them. Thus Dickens's humorous pictures of the discomforts of steam and canal boats, and stage coaches, — though all who have ever felt them, acknowledge the striking fidelity of his pencil, — are meant as satires upon American civilization in particular, and as if such things were found nowhere else; and not a little very excellent wrath has been expended upon him on that most gratuitous supposition. We have heard no defence set up against the charge of tobacco-chewing and spitting. In these two pleasant habits, we suppose we stand by general consent, and by our own admission, preëminent among the nations of the earth. It may indeed be true, — we presume it is so, — that Dickens notices the little discomforts of travelling more

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

frequently than philosophical travellers would be likely to do; — not because he is disappointed and vexed at finding such things are, but because he has a lively susceptibility, and they strike him in a picturesque or ludicrous light; because he has a natural inclination to work up little incidents, which the common man thinks nothing of, into scenes; and this natural tendency of the creative faculty has, in his case, been heightened by long habits of inventive composition. It may be too, — we fancy it is, — the fact, that Dickens has never been much of a traveller. Probably his previous wanderings had not extended far beyond the immortal journeyings of the Pickwickians; so that he could only have drawn comparisons, had he been disposed to do it at all, between the United States and England. We see nothing to complain of in the peculiarity of his book just touched upon; on the contrary, we are pleased to have, in their original freshness, the impressions made by our country on such a mind as his. With some of these we are far from agreeing. What he says of the absence of humor in the New England character, is directly opposed to the result of our own observations, and we can have no doubt, that he is here mistaken. In several minor matters of fact, he is also unquestionably wrong.

But these things hardly lessen the general interest, with which we read the book. The picture he draws of the character of the American newspaper press, darkly colored as it is, does not surpass the truth, when applied to a portion, — a very large portion, it must be confessed, — of the metropolitan papers. But he does not make sufficiently emphatic exceptions and distinctions; and, when he comes to speak of the universality of its evil influence, its omnipotence and omnipresence, his vigorous, startling, and almost terrific language is quite too unqualified. We have no faith in the existence of such a demoniac power, as that he describes. The profligate papers, numerous as they are, and widely as their circulation ranges, neither express, nor guide, nor govern, what can with any propriety be called the public opinion of the country; they may open their foul mouths in full cry upon a man of character, year after year, and through every State in the Union, but they can harm him no more than the idle wind. They are read, despised, and the next day utterly forgotten. A temporary prejudice may be raised,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and that is all. Their cowardly malice, their ignorance, vulgarity, and profligacy, overshoot the mark. Instead of making the sober and thinking members of the community believe their falsehoods, they make them almost disbelieve their facts. It has come to be nearly taken for granted, that what is printed by a certain class of newspapers is only such stuff as dreams are made of. This being the case, we look upon the boundless power Dickens ascribes to the worst part of the American newspaper press with as much incredulity, as we should upon the asserted wonders of any necromantic agency. News-boys cry them through the streets, and thrust them upon steam-boat and rail-road passengers, at depots and landing-places. They are found at reading-rooms and at hotels, and sometimes in grocers' shops ; but who ever saw them in the houses of the elegant and refined ? Who was ever influenced in his conduct by any fear of their espionage, or any apprehension of their attacks ? There may possibly be single instances, but we have never happened to know them. Pot-house politicians may mistake their billingsgate for the expression of public sentiment ; and vulgar demagogues, fishing, as the ancient Satyrist expresses it, in the turbid waters of public tumults, may dread their censures or value their applause. But the honorable and high-minded man, conscious of no wrong, and aiming at noble ends by noble means, has nothing to fear from the spiteful hissings of that many-headed hydra, a corrupt and filthy press.

The style of this book is, like that of Dickens's other writings, free, graphic, and flowing. It has a rapid movement, as if he wrote as fast as his pen could be driven across the paper. Sometimes, therefore, it is incorrect, and it is frequently disfigured by the two or three solecisms we have mentioned before. It abounds in touches of the poetical and imaginative. Striking expressions, brilliant descriptions, witty turns, and humorous sallies, are scattered in sparkling profusion over its animated pages. The sea-passages have attracted great and deserved admiration. The graver parts of the book, — such as the visit to the Blind Institution at South Boston, the affecting account of Laura Bridgman, and the forcible comments upon the solitary system of prison discipline in Philadelphia, — are written in a deep, earnest, fervent spirit, and come from a heart throbbing with the best sympathies of our nature. The tone of the book, through-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

out, is frank, honest, and manly. He has steered clear of all personalities, though he has not lost, through over-fastidiousness, any point of what he deems to be the truth. He has shown excellent taste in mentioning his peculiar reception here, only in the most general terms, and that, too, at the conclusion of his book.

It is almost superfluous to give extracts from a book so generally read as this; and yet we cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of enlivening this rambling paper with a few of its gems. The following sentences, from the "passage out," present a lively and beautiful picture.

"To one unaccustomed to such scenes, this [the night] is a very striking time on shipboard. Afterward, and when its novelty had long worn off, it never ceased to have a peculiar interest and charm for me. The gloom through which the great, black mass holds its direct and certain course; the rushing water, plainly heard, but dimly seen; the broad, white, glistening track, that follows in the vessel's wake; the men on the look-out forward, who would be scarcely visible against the dark sky, but for their blotting out some score of glistening stars; the helmsman at the wheel, with the illuminated card before him, shining, a speck of light amid the darkness, like something sentient and of Divine intelligence; the melancholy sighing of the wind through block, and rope, and chain; the gleaming forth of light from every crevice, nook, and tiny piece of glass about the decks, as though the ship were filled with fire in hiding, ready to burst through any outlet, wild with its resistless power of death and ruin. At first, too, and even when the hour, and all the objects it exalts, have come to be familiar, it is difficult, alone and thoughtful, to hold them to their proper shapes and forms. They change with the wandering fancy; assume the semblance of things left far away; put on the well-remembered aspect of favorite places dearly loved; and even people them with shadows. Streets, houses, rooms, — figures so like their usual occupants, that they have startled me by their reality, which far exceeded, as it seemed to me, all power of mine to conjure up the absent, — have, many and many a time, at such an hour, grown suddenly out of objects with whose real look, and use, and purpose I was as well acquainted as with my own two hands." — Vol. I. pp. 22, 23 (English Edition).

And, a little farther on, another passage;

"A head wind! Imagine a human face upon the vessel's prow, with fifteen thousand Samsons in one, bent upon driving her

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

back, and hitting her exactly between the eyes whenever she attempts to advance an inch. Imagine the ship herself, with every pulse and artery of her huge body swollen and bursting under this maltreatment, sworn to go on or die. Imagine the wind howling, the sea roaring, the rain beating; all in furious array against her. Picture the sky both dark and wild, and the clouds, in fearful sympathy with the waves, making another ocean in the air. Add to all this, the clattering on deck and down below; the tread of hurried feet; the loud, hoarse shouts of seamen; the gurgling in and out of water through the scuppers; with, every now and then, the striking of a heavy sea upon the planks above, with the deep, dead, heavy sound of thunder heard within a vault, — and there is the head-wind of that January morning." — Vol. I. pp. 26, 27.

And one passage more from this remarkable chapter;

"The laboring of the ship in the troubled sea on this night I shall never forget. 'Will it ever be worse than this?' was a question I had often heard asked, when every thing was sliding and bumping about, and when it certainly did seem difficult to comprehend the possibility of any thing afloat being more disturbed without toppling over and going down. But what the agitation of a steam-vessel is, on a bad winter's night in the wild Atlantic, it is impossible for the most vivid imagination to conceive. To say that she is flung down on her side in the waves, with her masts dipping into them, and that, springing up again, she rolls over on the other side, until a heavy sea strikes her with the noise of a hundred great guns and hurls her back, — that she stops, and staggers, and shivers, as though stunned, and then, with a violent throbbing at her heart, darts onward like a monster goaded into madness, to be beaten down, and battered, and crushed, and leaped on by the angry sea, — that thunder, lightning, hail, and rain, and wind, are all in fierce contention for the mastery, — that every plank has its groan, every nail its shriek, and every drop of water in the great ocean its howling voice, — is nothing. To say that all is grand and appalling and horrible in the last degree, is nothing. Words cannot express it; thoughts cannot convey it. Only a dream can call it up again in all its fury, rage, and passion." — Vol. I. pp. 33, 34.

Our traveller thus discourses, in the account of his visit to South Boston;

"It is strange to watch the faces of the blind, and see how free they are from all concealment of what is passing in their thoughts; observing which, a man with eyes may blush to con-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

template the mask he wears. Allowing for one shade of anxious expression, which is never absent from their countenances, and the like of which we may readily detect in our own faces, if we try to feel our way in the dark, every idea, as it rises within them, is expressed with the lightning's speed and nature's truth. If the company at a rout or drawing-room at court could only for one time be as unconscious of the eyes upon them as blind men and women are, what secrets would come out, and what a worker of hypocrisy this sight, the loss of which we so much pity, would appear to be!

"The thought occurred to me, as I sat down in another room before a girl, blind, deaf, and dumb; destitute of smell, and nearly so of taste; before a fair young creature with every human faculty, and hope, and power of goodness and affection, enclosed within her delicate frame, and but one outward sense, the sense of touch. There she was before me, built up, as it were, in a marble cell, impervious to any ray of light or particle of sound, with her poor white hand peeping through a chink in the wall, beckoning to some good man for help, that an immortal soul might be awakened.

"Long before I looked upon her the help had come. Her face was radiant with intelligence and pleasure. Her hair, braided by her own hands, was bound about a head whose intellectual capacity and developement were beautifully expressed in its grateful outline and its broad, open brow; her dress, arranged by herself, was a pattern of neatness and simplicity; the work she had knitted lay beside her; her writing-book was on the desk she leaned upon. From the mournful ruin of such bereavement there had slowly risen up this gentle, tender, guileless, grateful-hearted being.

"Like other inmates of that house, she had a green riband bound round her eyelids. A doll she had dressed lay near her upon the ground. I took it up, and saw that she had made a green fillet such as she wore herself, and fastened it about its mimic eyes.

"She was seated in a little enclosure, made by school-desks and forms, writing her daily journal. But soon finishing this pursuit, she engaged in an animated communication with a teacher who sat beside her. This was a favorite mistress with the poor pupil. If she could see the face of her fair instructress, she would not love her less, I am sure."— Vol. I. pp. 72–75.

The remarks on the factory system at Lowell will probably surprise the English not a little; but, as the facts on

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which they are founded are perfectly familiar here, we pass them by.

All adventurous navigators of the Connecticut River will recognise the truth of the following description of the mighty craft, that plies on that renowned stream.

"It certainly was not called a small steamboat without reason. I omitted to ask the question, but I should think it must have been of about half a pony power. Mr. Paap, the celebrated dwarf, might have lived and died happily in the cabin, which was fitted with common sash-windows like an ordinary dwellinghouse. These windows had bright red curtains, too, hung on slack strings across the lower panes; so that it looked like the parlour of a lilliputian public-house, which had got afloat in a flood, or some other water accident, and was drifting nobody knew where. But even in this chamber there was a rocking-chair. It would be impossible to get on anywhere in America without a rocking-chair.

"I am afraid to tell how many feet short this vessel was, or how many feet narrow; to apply the words length and width to such measurement, would be a contradiction in terms. But I may state, that we all kept the middle of the deck, lest the boat should unexpectedly tip over; and that the machinery, by some surprising process of condensation, worked between it and the keel; the whole forming a warm sandwich, about three feet thick." — Vol. I. pp. 172, 173.

On the whole, we think the liveliest portion of the book is that devoted to New York. We select the description of the pigs, as being done to the very life, and fully equal to Head's famous passage on the same subject, in the "Bubbles from the Brunnen."

"Let us go forth again into the cheerful streets.

"Once more in Broadway! Here are the same ladies in bright colors, walking to and fro, in pairs and singly; yonder the very same light blue parasol, which passed and repassed the hotel window twenty times while we were sitting there. We are going to cross here. Take care of the pigs. Two portly sows are trotting up behind this carriage, and a select party of half a-dozen gentlemen-hogs have just now turned the corner.

"Here is a solitary swine, lounging homeward by himself. He has only one ear; having parted with the other to vagrant dogs in the course of his city rambles. But he gets on very well without it; and leads a roving, gentlemanly, vagabond kind of life, somewhat answering to that of our club-men at home.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He leaves his lodgings every morning at a certain hour, throws himself upon the town, gets through his day in some manner quite satisfactory to himself, and regularly appears at the door of his own house again at night, like the mysterious master of Gil Blas. He is a free-and-easy, careless, indifferent kind of pig, having a very large acquaintance among other pigs of the same character, whom he rather knows by sight than conversation, as he seldom troubles himself to stop and exchange civilities, but goes grunting down the kennel, turning up the news and small-talk of the city, in the shape of cabbage-stalks and offal, and bearing no tails but his own; which is a very short one, for his old enemies, the dogs, have been at that too, and have left him hardly enough to swear by. He is in every respect a republican pig, going wherever he pleases, and mingling with the best society, on an equal, if not superior footing, for every one makes way when he appears, and the haughtiest give him the wall if he prefer it. He is a great philosopher, and seldom moved, unless by the dogs before mentioned. Sometimes, indeed, you may see his small eye twinkling on a slaughtered friend, whose carcass garnishes a butcher's door-post, but he grunts out, 'Such is life; all flesh is pork!' buries his nose in the mire again, and waddles down the gutter; comforting himself with the reflection, that there is one snout the less to anticipate stray cabbage-stalks, at any rate.

"They are the city scavengers, these pigs. Ugly brutes they are; having, for the most part, scanty, brown backs, like the lids of old horse-hair trunks; spotted with unwholesome black blotches. They have long, gaunt legs, too, and such peaked snouts, that, if one of them could be persuaded to sit for his profile, nobody would recognise it for a pig's likeness. They are never attended upon, or fed, or driven, or caught, but are thrown upon their own resources in early life, and become preternaturally knowing in consequence. Every pig knows where he lives, much better than anybody could tell him. At this hour, just as evening is closing in, you will see them roaming towards bed by scores, eating their way to the last. Occasionally, some youth among them who has over-eaten himself, or has been much worried by dogs, trots shrinkingly homeward, like a prodigal son; but this is a rare case; perfect self-possession and self-reliance, and immovable composure, being their foremost attributes." — Vol. I. pp. 205–208.

Perhaps the most highly wrought among the serious passages, is that upon the Philadelphia prisons, to which we have before alluded. It moved us deeply, and, if we mis-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

take not, it will forcibly impress the public mind on the subject of prison discipline. But it is too long to extract entire, and we cannot consent to mutilate it.

We shall not follow our author through his western wanderings; but, joining him at Niagara, end our remarks with his beautiful description of the great Falls. The sublime figure at the close of the passage, is worthy of the greatest poet. It is a conception, that would be admired in the awful genius of Dante.

"We were at the foot of the American Fall. I could see an immense torrent of water tearing headlong down from some great height, but had no idea of shape, or situation, or any thing but vague immensity.

"When we were seated in the little ferry-boat, and were crossing the swollen river immediately before both cataracts, I began to feel what it was: but I was in a manner stunned, and unable to comprehend the vastness of the scene. It was not until I came on Table Rock, and looked, — Great Heaven, on what a fall of bright-green water! — that it came upon me in its full might and majesty.

"Then, when I felt how near to my Creator I was standing, the first effect, and the enduring one, — instant and lasting, — of the tremendous spectacle, was peace. Peace of mind; tranquillity; calm recollections of the dead; Great thoughts of eternal rest and happiness; nothing of gloom or terror. Niagara was at once stamped upon my heart, an image of Beauty; to remain there, changeless and indelible, until its pulses cease to beat for ever.

"Oh, how the strife and trouble of our daily life receded from my view, and lessened in the distance, during the ten memorable days we passed on that enchanted ground! What voices spoke from out the thundering water; what faces, faded from the earth, looked out upon me from its gleaming depths; what heavenly promise glistened in those angels' tears, the drops of many hues, that showered around, and twined themselves about the gorgeous arches which the changing rainbows made!

"I never stirred in all that time from the Canadian side, whither I had gone at first. I never crossed the river again; for I knew there were people on the other shore, and in such a place it is natural to shun strange company. To wander to and fro all day, and see the cataracts from all points of view; to stand upon the edge of the Great Horse Shoe Fall, marking the hurried water gathering strength as it approached the verge, yet seeming, too, to pause before it shot into the gulf below; to gaze from

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the river's level up to the torrent as it came streaming down; to climb the neighbouring heights and watch it through the trees, and see the wreathing water in the rapids hurrying on to take its fearful plunge; to linger in the shadow of the solemn rocks three miles below; watching the river as, stirred by no visible cause, it heaved and eddied and awoke the echoes, being troubled yet, far down beneath the surface, by its giant leap; to have Niagara before me, lighted by the sun and by the moon, red in the day's decline, and gray as evening slowly fell upon it; to look upon it every day, and wake up in the night and hear its ceaseless voice; this was enough.

"I think in every quiet season now, still do those waters roll and leap, and roar and tumble, all day long; still are the rainbows spanning them, a hundred feet below. Still, when the sun is on them, do they shine and glow like molten gold. Still, when the day is gloomy, do they fall like snow, or seem to crumble away like the front of a great chalk cliff, or roll adown the rock like dense white smoke. But always does the mighty stream appear to die as it comes down, and always from the unfathomable grave arises that tremendous ghost of spray and mist which is never laid; which has haunted this place with the same dread solemnity, since Darkness brooded on the deep, and that first flood before the Deluge, — Light, — came rushing on Creation at the word of God." — Vol. II. pp. 177 - 180.

NOTE

TO ARTICLE III. OF THE PRESENT NUMBER.

THE following Note should have been inserted at the foot of page 60, where reference is made to Mr. Hallam's sketch of the period of Lorenzo de' Medici.

Yielding to the fascination of the subject, Mr. Hallam has here produced, perhaps, the most beautiful passage in the book, rising through eloquence almost to poetry. And, in this mood, while he adorns the landscape, in one of Lorenzo's farms, with "herds of buffaloes," contrasting their diabolical aspect with the mild beauty of the Tuscan oxen, he boldly states, that Lorenzo "introduced" from the East, this "new animal," "*since* natu-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ralized in Italy." But, as if the severer muse of history had rebuked him for his flight, he appends the following half-penitential note.

"With respect to the buffaloes, I have no other authority than these lines of Politian, in his poem of 'Ambra,' on the farm of Lorenzo at Poggio Cajano.

> 'Atque aliud nigris missum, quis credat? ab Indis,
> Ruminat insuetas armentum discolor herbas.'

"But I must own, that Buffon tells us, though without quoting any authority, that the buffalo was introduced into Italy as early as the seventh century. I did not take the trouble of consulting Aldrovandus, who would, perhaps, have confirmed him, — especially as *I have a better opinion of my readers, than to suppose they would care about the matter*"!

And this from Mr. Hallam! A principle and mode of proceeding, which would vitiate his whole work, if a love of fine writing and impatience of research could be found often so to have betrayed him. The fact in question is not without interest in Natural History, and, if important enough to be mentioned at all, should be treated accurately.

The truth is, that Buffon says expressly, "On sait par les *Annales de l'Italie*, que le premier bufle y fut amené vers la fin du sixième siècle, *l'an* 595;" and, moreover, he refers to the "Travels" (in Italy) of Misson, a respectable name. Now what *Annals of Italy* could be meant, but *the* Annals by Muratori, at Mr. Hallam's elbow? Accordingly, under the above year (or the next), we find Muratori making the following record, on the authority of Paulus Diaconus (who wrote in the *eighth* century, and whose Latin History was for the first time printed in Muratori's "Scriptores Italici," — a work not foreign to Mr. Hallam); "Circa questi tempi si videro *per la prima volta* in Italia ..... de' bufali, che erano riguardati per maraviglia dagli Italiani."

Aldrovandus would, indeed, have shown our author, that his chronology was wrong, as would the mention of the animals by Albertus Magnus in the *thirteenth* century. And with respect to his only authority, the distich of Politian, "*missum* ..... *ab Indis*" imports nothing as to the time of their introduction, any more than a poetical description of an English nobleman's establishment at the present day, which should speak of a "superb" turkey-cock as "sent from the Indies," would fix the time when the English fox first learned to "filch the turkey's callow care," which might have been in the days of Columbus.

But, Natural History apart, it is chiefly as the historian of *lit-*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

erature, that our author has disturbed us by his unguardedness and hardihood. Few scholars know, better than he, that, long before the era of Lorenzo, the name of the buffalo was settled in the vulgar language and rustic proverbs of Italy; before then, as now, the violent in the hands of the cunning were "led by the nose like the buffalo"; before that time buffalo-races (*bufolate*) had amused the populace of Florence; nor can we doubt, that these animals (which, and not the good old Georgic breed of beeves, — as we love to suppose, — must have furnished the Catholic legends with their images of incarnate demons,) for eight full centuries, had, in pairs, sullenly borne the Italian yoke, and, in dusky herds, had "lowered" over the Maremma.

NOTE

TO ARTICLE IV. OF THE LAST NUMBER.

Our readers may remember, that, in the last Number, we briefly indicated some remarkable thefts from our pages, on the part of the English "Monthly Review." We closed our article with a passage from that journal, condemning all such piratical doings, as those of which we had convicted it. We have since been amused to observe, what we had then overlooked, that that very passage was taken by the "Monthly Reviewers" from one of our old volumes. Let the reader compare page 133 of the forty-fourth volume of this work.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

QUARTERLY LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

ANNUALS.

The Rose of Sharon; a Religious Souvenir, for 1843. Edited by Miss Sarah C. Edgarton. Boston: A. Tompkins & B. B. Mussey. 16mo. pp. 312.

The Christian Souvenir, an Offering for Christmas and the New Year. Edited by Isaac F. Shepard. Boston: Henry B. Williams. 16mo. pp. 304.

The United States Almanac; or Complete Ephemeris for the Year 1843; wherein the Sun's Rising, Setting, &c., are given for Six different Parallels of Latitude, embracing the Whole Extent of the Union; also, a Collection of such Tables as are of most frequent Use among Engineers, for the Determination of Latitude, Time, &c.; a Complete Census of the United States, from the Official Report just presented to Congress, including the Population of every Town, County, Territory, and State, arranged in Alphabetical Order; the Principal Officers of the Government, and the various Departments, with their Compensation; a View of all the State Debts, and the various purposes for which they were contracted; and numerous Statistics, relative to Commerce, Manufactures, Agriculture, &c. By John Downes, late of the Northeastern Boundary Survey. Philadelphia: E. H. Butler. 16mo. pp. 320:

The Gift: a New Year's and Christmas Present. MDCCCXLIII. Philadelphia: Carey & Hart. 16mo. pp. 328.

The Rose; or, Affection's Gift for 1843. Edited by Emily Marshall. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 12mo. pp. 216.

The American Almanac and Repository of Useful Knowledge, for the Year 1843. Boston: David H. Williams. 12mo. pp. 333.

The Astro-Magnetic Almanac, for 1843. In which all the Motions of the Earth are demonstrated, in accordance with the Theory of the Ancient Eastern Nations. By H. H. Sherwood, M. D. Calendar by David Young, Philom. No. 1. Boston: Saxton & Peirce. 12mo. pp. 72.

The Phrenological Almanac, for 1843. By L. N. Fowler. New York: O. S. & L. N. Fowler. 12mo. pp. 46.

Dr. Hitchcock's Teeth Almanac, for the Year 1843. Boston: Saxton & Peirce. 24mo. pp. 24.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EDUCATION.

The Pictorial Primer; being an Introduction to the Pictorial Spelling-Book; designed as a First Book for Children, in Families and Schools. By Rensselaer Bentley; Author of the "Pictorial Spelling-Book," &c. Boston: Saxton & Peirce. 12mo. pp. 48.

A Pictorial Natural History; embracing a View of the Mineral, Vegetable, and Animal Kingdoms, for the Use of Schools. By S. G. Goodrich, Author of "Peter Parley's Tales." Boston: James Munroe & Co. 12mo. pp. 415.

A Primer of the English Language, for the Use of Families and Schools. By Samuel Worcester, Author of "Worcester's Series of Readers." Boston: Jenks & Palmer. 12mo. pp. 72.

The Gorgias of Plato, chiefly according to Stallbaum's Text, with Notes, by Theodore D. Woolsey, Professor of Greek in Yale College. Boston: James Munroe & Co. 12mo. pp. 232.

This very valuable edition of the "Gorgias" of Plato will supply a want which has long been felt in our colleges. No course of Greek classical studies can be considered complete, or even approaching completeness, that does not embrace something of Plato, the most eloquent and imaginative, as well as the most profound, of the Greek philosophers. The Dialogue entitled "Gorgias" is one of the most interesting and instructive of that great writer's works, and the study of it must have a peculiarly good effect upon the moral feelings of young Americans training for public or professional life. The text of this edition is principally that of Stallbaum, the ablest of all the editors of Plato on the Continent. An excellent Introduction is prefixed, containing a very clear and able exposition of the subject matter of the Dialogue. The Greek text is carefully printed; and a body of notes is subjoined, containing ample illustrations of the difficulties of the text, and translated passages from many of Plato's other writings. In these notes we recognise the same careful, discriminating, and laborious scholarship, which was exhibited in the commentaries on the select Tragedies edited by Prof. Woolsey, so much to the advantage of Greek studies in the United States. The needful learning is brought to bear upon the difficult points of the text or the argument, with no pedantic display, and no unnecessary wordiness; and this is characteristic of all of Professor Woolsey's contributions to classical literature. We consider this, on the whole, the most important of his works, and, we doubt not, the classical teachers of the whole country will join with us in applauding the successful toils of an accomplished scholar, who has devoted himself with singleness of purpose to the study and illustration of the great monuments of reasoning and imagination left us by the master-minds of the ancient world.

Our teachers have heretofore had great difficulty in introducing Plato to their students, on account of the absence of good editions. We trust the reception of "Gorgias" will be such as to induce Mr. Woolsey to publish some of the philosopher's other writings. It is among the best services he can render to the higher education of American youth; and one which no scholar among us is better qualified to perform.

Slate and Black Board Exercises, by William A. Alcott, Late Editor of "Annals of Education," "Confessions of a Schoolmaster," &c. &c. Hartford: Tyler & Porter. 12mo. pp. 225.

Standard Orthography and Orthoëpy of the English Language; simplified by a Scientific Classification of the Orthographic Symbols, for Common Schools, Academies, and Private Instruction. By George Stearns. Providence: Benjamin F. Moore. 12mo. pp. 48.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Treatise on Algebra, embracing, besides the Elementary Principles, all the higher parts usually taught in Colleges; containing, moreover, the New Method of Cubic and Higher Equations, as well as the Developement and Application of the more recently discovered Theorem of Sturm. By George R. Perkins, A. M., Principal and Professor of Mathematics in the Utica Academy, and Author of "Higher Arithmetic." Utica: O. Hutchinson. 8vo. pp. 360.

M. T. Ciceronis Tusculanarum Quæstionum Libri Quinque, ex Editionibus Oliveti et Ernesti. Accedunt Notæ Anglicæ. Curâ C. K. Dillaway, A. M. Philadelphiæ: Perkins et Purvey. 12mo. Tom. II. pp. 216 et 211.

M. Accii Plauti Amphitruo et Aulularia, ex Editione J. T. Gronovii. Accedunt Notæ Anglicæ. Curâ C. K. Dillaway, A. M. Philadelphiæ: Perkins et Purvey. 12mo. pp. 204.

These three little volumes, like their predecessors by the same editor, are of a very convenient form, and well and correctly printed. They are designed for common use, and accompanied by a body of brief notes in English. They are pleasant pocket volumes, of about the size that Dr. Johnson liked, — such as may be read on a journey, or while standing before the fire.

An Elementary Treatise on the Structure and Operations of the National and State Governments of the United States. Designed for the Use of Schools and Academies, and for General Readers. By Charles Mason, A. M., Counsellor at Law. Boston: David H. Williams. 1842. 12mo. pp. 233.

We have seldom met with a work, which brings together within a small compass so great an amount of useful information for all classes of citizens, as this modest treatise by Mr. Mason. It should be introduced at once into our common schools, and be studied by every inhabitant of the country, who wishes to know the practical working of the institutions under which he lives, and the nature and limitations of the rights, which, as a subject of a free government, he is invited to exercise. We can hardly give a complete idea of the nature of the work, or the variety of subjects treated in it, without transcribing the whole table of contents; but among the more important topics, may be mentioned the old Colonial Governments, the Continental Congress and the Confederation, the Legislative Departments, and the modes of proceeding in the Enactment of Laws, the Organization of the Courts, and the course of action in civil and criminal cases, the distribution of powers and duties among the several departments and offices, Patents and Copyrights, Bankruptcy, Navigation, and Corporations. The writer does not aim at general disquisition upon these and other points; but he labors to impart, in a concise and intelligible form, such general knowledge relating to them, as may easily be apprehended by all classes of readers, and as daily experience shows to be indispensable for the guidance of conduct. The authorities could not be given in a treatise of so limited dimensions; but, after a careful examination, we are satisfied of the caution and fidelity of the writer, and of the entire correctness of his statements. A few tables are appended to the book, containing some statistical matter of general interest, and very useful comparative views of the State governments. Many persons ought to make a careful and complete study of such a work, and all will find the advantage of possessing it for the sake of frequent consultation.

A Grammar of the German Language, by George Henry Noehden, LL. D. From the Eighth London Edition, by the Rev. C. H. F. Bi-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

alloblotzky, Ph. D., with Alterations and large Additions, chiefly from the Grammars of Dr. Becker. By the Rev. Barnas Sears, D. D., President of the Newton Theological Institution. Andover: Allen, Morrill, & Wardwell.

We have examined this Grammar with great satisfaction. It is a step far in advance of all the German Grammars hitherto published in the English language. The work of the editor has been done thoroughly, faithfully, and laboriously. He has brought to his task an uncommon knowledge of the German language, as written and spoken, and has kept pace with the rapid advances of German philology. It is well known, that the German scholars, within the last twenty years, have subjected their native tongue to the same principles of scientific investigation, which have been by them so triumphantly applied to the Grammars of the Latin and Greek. Historical inquiries of the widest range have been instituted, and the ancient monuments of the national language have been brought to light, explained, illustrated, and made the basis of philosophical analysis. Among the scholars who have given most attention to this subject, Becker stands very high. His Grammars of his native tongue have received the most emphatic approbation. President Sears has availed himself of Becker's works, and interwoven the substance of many chapters in this new edition of Noehden. The only thing we see to regret is, that he did not abandon Noehden entirely, as he has done to a great extent, and make a wholly new Grammar upon the better principles of the recent investigations, and publish it under his own name. We hope another edition will appear in this form.

The German student will be pleased and instructed by the admirably condensed history of the High German, and the notices, which accompany it, of the kindred dialects. The chapter on pronunciation is excellent, and the peculiarities that mark the different parts of Germany are described in a very interesting manner. We think that that difficult and mysterious matter, the German declensions, will be found to be wonderfully simplified in this Grammar. The chapter on the formation and derivation of words is of great importance. The Syntax is philosophical in principle, and clear in arrangement.

This Grammar proves of how great importance a profound knowledge of general philology is to the illustration of any particular grammar, and what an interest may be imparted to a subject, generally considered dry and barren, by wide-reaching historical learning.

ΗΡΟΔΟΤΟΥ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΩΝ ΛΟΓΟΙ Θ. Herodotus, from the Text of Schweighaeuser, with English Notes. Edited by C. S. Wheeler, A. M., Tutor in Greek in Harvard University. In Two Volumes. Boston: James Munroe & Co. 1842. pp. 439 and 420.

The young scholar, to whom the public is indebted for this edition of Herodotus, has been for several years a laborious and successful teacher of the classics in Harvard College. He is now prosecuting his studies in Germany. For some time his classical pursuits centred in the study of Herodotus, whose History has been adopted as one of the text-books in the early part of the College course. A convenient edition was wanted, and Mr. Wheeler set himself about supplying the want with characteristic zeal. He took Schweighaeuser's text as the basis of his edition, but adopted the best of Gaisford's, Bekker's, and Bachr's emendations, and many of Long's suggestions as to the punctuation. The type is the well known and admired long primer of the University Press, and the printing is marked by the usual accuracy of that establishment. The sheets have all passed under the critical eye of Mr. Sophocles, the able author of the Greek Grammar, and Mr. Wheeler's successor as Greek Tutor in the University. A map,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

copied from Baehr's learned edition, accompanies the work; and K. O. Müller's "Life of Herodotus," taken from that admirable and deeply lamented scholar's "History of Greek Literature," is prefixed.

We have examined the notes with some care, and feel it to be incumbent on us to say, that Mr. Wheeler has discharged his duty with signal industry, ability, and conscientiousness. They are exceedingly condensed, giving in the fewest words a great variety of information, not merely useful, but indispensable to the proper understanding of the most enchanting of chroniclers. These notes embrace not only grammatical and philological explanations, and accurate references to the later authorities upon these points, but numerous historical, geographical, and topographical illustrations, from which the student cannot fail to draw the most precise and useful information. For, besides the judicious use he has made of the labors of previous editors, Mr. Wheeler has for the first time brought the works of Wilkinson, Clinton, Thirlwall, Müller, Leake, Wordsworth, and Rennell to bear upon the illustration of Herodotus. How valuable this class of illustrations is, may easily be seen. The personal knowledge of Mr. Sophocles, who, being a native Greek, has a familiar acquaintance with many of the countries over which the historical scenes of Herodotus extend, has corrected many errors into which foreign topographers had been led, and has thus added to the critical value of the commentaries to this edition.

Besides the great amount of various information which Mr. Wheeler has condensed into his notes, he has treated more at length of certain special and important topics, in four brief *Excursuses* at the end of the second volume. The first contains the substance of Rennell's inquiry into the measures of distance used by Herodotus; the second treats of the disputed history of the canal cut through Mount Athos by Xerxes, and presents a striking array of proofs, that the story told by Herodotus is substantially correct; the third treats of Xerxes's bridges over the Hellespont; and the fourth explains the composition of the immense armies of the Persian king, and gives some details of their military supplies.

This edition of Herodotus makes two very handsome volumes, and is an important addition to the classical resources of students in the United States. We are much indebted to Mr. Wheeler for making the delightful pages of this honest old historian accessible to scholars in so pleasing a form, and with such invaluable accompaniments. Mr. Wheeler has shown uncommon ability, perseverance, and learning; and this early proof of his scholarship and of his zeal for the higher range of learned studies, gives rich and hopeful promise of future usefulness and honorable distinction.

HISTORY.

The History of New Hampshire, from its Discovery, in 1614, to the Passage of the Toleration Act, in 1819. By George Barstow. Concord: J. S. Boyd. 8vo. pp. 426.

Atlas of American History, on a Novel Plan, presenting, at one View, the most important Events in the History of the Country, from its Discovery by Columbus, down to the Present Time, 1842; Including the Spanish and English Navigators of the Fifteenth Century; Plantation of Colonies; Founding of Cities; Governors of the Colonies and of the Republic; Indian Wars; Sachems, Divines, First Printers, Statesmen, Orators, Warriors, Admirals, Commodores; Ministers Plenipotentiary, Secretaries, and Presidents; Battles, Sieges, Earthquakes, and Remarkable Phenomena; Population at Different Periods, Literature, Slave-Trade, and Ecclesiastical History; arranged contemporaneously with the Kings of England, France, and, at par-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ticular times, of other Kingdoms. Designed to be the same to History, that Maps are to Geography. By Jerome B. Holgate, Author of "Chart of Scripture and Ancient History, on a Novel and Interesting Plan." 4to.

In the study of History, it is of some use to have a large number of facts and dates presented at a single view, so that their connexion in time, and their other relations, may be readily perceived. A connexion is thus supplied to the fragmentary and unconnected ideas, which one is apt to imbibe, from following a continuous narrative, relating only to a single state, or a particular period. Mr. Holgate's plan appears well adapted to answer this useful purpose; and, judging from a cursory examination, we believe that it is executed with skill and fidelity. There are many other Historical Atlases, but we have seen no one which seems to be so comprehensive, accurate, and convenient for use. A vast body of particulars in history, biography, chronology, and geography, are brought together, and so well grouped, that each item of information has an appropriate place, and can be easily found by inspection. We have never seen a work of the kind, American or foreign, of which the plates were better executed; the lettering is clear, bold, and handsome; and the lines are cut with distinctness and accuracy. These are important advantages in a work of this sort. As a manual of reference, therefore, and as a text-book for instruction, it has great merit, and will probably come into extensive use. It is particularly well adapted to the early history of this country, during the time when the several settlements were growing up into large communities, and their fortunes, independent of each other at first, were gradually combining into a unity of interest, and creating a basis for the final establishment of a united people and a single government. As the plan covers so much ground, and embraces such a number and variety of facts, we cannot vouch for the accuracy of the Atlas upon all points; but it offers so many tokens of patient research, and of a judicious discrimination in the use of materials, that it invites confidence, and merits a diligent examination.

JUVENILE BOOKS.

Breakfast-Table Science; or, The Philosophy of Common Things. Written expressly for the Amusement and Instruction of Young People. By J. H. Wright. New York: Alexander V. Blake. 12mo. pp. 193.

The Adventures of Henry Hudson. By the Author of "Uncle Philip's Conversations." New York: D. Appleton & Co. 12mo. pp. 161.

A Kiss for a Blow; or, a Collection of Stories for Children; showing them how to prevent quarrelling. By Henry C. Wright. Boston: B. B. Mussey. 12mo. pp. 180.

Charles and Rosa, or Stories for the Little Children of the New Church. Part I. Boston: Otis Clapp. 12mo. pp. 54.

The Adventures of Captain John Smith, the Founder of the Colony of Virginia. By the Author of "Uncle Philip's Conversations." New York: D. Appleton & Co. 12mo. pp. 201.

Three Months on the Sea; or, a Voyage to India; showing how Philip Grey improved and beguiled his time while sailing on the Ocean. Illustrated by Engravings. Boston: James Munroe & Co. 12mo. pp. 144.

The Rollo Philosophy. Part III. Fire. Part IV. The Sky. By

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Author of the "Rollo Books." Boston: Otis, Broaders, & Co. 12mo. pp. 192 and 192.

Emma, or the Lost, Found; or Reliance on God Rewarded. New York: Dayton & Newman. 12mo. pp. 193.

The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe; revised with special Reference to Moral Tendency, and adapted to the Capacity of the Young. With numerous Illustrations. Philadelphia: Edward C. Biddle. 16mo. pp. 191.

LAW.

Reports of the Cases Argued and Determined in the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts. By Theron Metcalf. Volume II. Boston: Charles C. Little & James Brown. 8vo. pp. 671.

The Laws of the Different States and Territories of the United States, on Imprisonment for Debt. By Asa Kinne. Philadelphia: Thomas, Cowperthwaite, & Co. 8vo. pp. 56.

MEDICINE, ANATOMY, AND SURGERY.

The Family Physician; or, the Reformed System of Medicine; on Vegetable or Botanical Principles. Being a Compendium of the "American Practice." Designed for all Classes. In Nine Parts. By W. Beach, M. D. Illustrated with nearly 200 Engravings. Boston: Saxton & Peirce. 8vo. pp. 782.

A System of Human Anatomy, General and Special. By Erasmus Wilson, M. D., Lecturer on Anatomy, London. American Edition, edited by Paul B. Goddard, A. M., M. D., with 170 Illustrations by Gilbert, from the 2d London Edition. Philadelphia: Lee & Blanchard. 8vo. pp. 576.

General Therapeutics & Materia Medica, adapted for a Medical Text-Book. By Robley Dunglison, M. D., Prof. of Institutes of Medicine, &c., in Jefferson Med. Coll. of Philadelphia. Philadelphia: Lea & Blanchard. In 2 Vols. 8vo. Vol. I. pp. 515.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Tariff of Duties payable under the Act of Congress, passed and approved August 30, 1842, alphabetically arranged. With such Portions of the Act, in Addition to the Rates of Duty, as will be required by the Merchant to facilitate the Entry of Goods. And an Alphabetical Appendix. Compiled and arranged by John T. Prince, late Bond Clerk in the Boston Custom-House. Boston: S. N. Dickinson. 12mo. pp. 114.

A New System of Stenography for the Use of Schools and Colleges. By Charles Saxton, Stenographer. Boston: Saxton & Peirce. 12mo. pp. 126.

Attractions of Language, or a popular View of Natural Language, in all its varied Displays, in the Animate and the Inanimate World; and as corresponding with Instinct, Intelligence, and Reason; a Physiological Description of the Organs of Voice; an Account of the Origin of Artificial, Spoken Language: and a brief Analysis of Alphabetical Sounds. By Benj. F. Taylor, A. M. With an Introduction by

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Asahel C. Kendrick, A. M., Professor of the Greek Language and Literature in the Hamilton Lit. and Theo. Institution. Hamilton: J. & D. Atwood. 12mo. pp. 262.

The Book of the Navy; comprising a General History of the American Marine; and Particular Accounts of all the most celebrated Naval Battles, from the Declaration of Independence to the Present Time. Compiled from the best Authorities, by John Frost, A. M., Professor of Belles Lettres in the High School of Philadelphia. With an Appendix. Splendidly embellished with numerous Engravings from Original Drawings, by William Croome. And Portraits, on Steel, of Distinguished Naval Commanders. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 8vo. pp. 344.

A Descriptive and Historical Account of Hydraulic and other Machines for raising Water, Ancient and Modern; with Observations on various Subjects connected with the Mechanic Arts; including the Progressive Developement of the Steam Engine; in Five Books. Illustrated by nearly 300 Engravings. By Thomas Ewbank. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 8vo. pp. 582.

A Treatise on some of the Insects of New England, which are injurious to Vegetation. By Thaddeus William Harris, M. D. Cambridge: John Owen. 8vo. pp. 459.

Sporting Scenes and Sundry Sketches; being the Miscellaneous Writings of J. Cypress, Jr. Edited by Frank Forester. New York: Gould, Banks & Co. 2 Vols. 12mo. pp. 241 and 231.

Miscellanies. By Stephen Collins, M. D. Philadelphia: Carey & Hart. 12mo. pp. 308.

Cookery, on a Simple and Healthful Plan. Confined principally to Vegetable Food. By a Practical Housekeeper. Boston: George W. Light. 12mo. pp. 51.

A Reply to the Letter of the Honorable Marcus Morton, late Governor of Massachusetts, on the Rhode-Island Question. By one of the Rhode-Island People. Providence: Knowles & Vose. 8vo. pp. 32.

Illustrations of the Principal Events in the Life of Washington. Embellished with 48 highly finished Engravings. From Original Paintings, by the most eminent American Artists. Edited by Jared Sparks. Boston: Charles Thomas & Co. 4to.

The Quod Correspondence, or the Attorney. By John Quod. Boston: Otis, Broaders, & Co. 2 Vols. 12mo. pp. 234 and 234.

The History of the Saints; or, an *Expose* of Joe Smith and Mormonism. By John C. Bennett. Boston: Leland & Whiting. 12mo. pp. 344.

Natural History of New York. By Authority. General Introduction; and Part I., Zoology. By James E. De Kay. [Part I. of Zoology, Mammalia.] New York: D. Appleton & Co. 8vo. pp. 188 and 146.

Gleanings by the Way; by Rev. John A. Clark, D. D., Rector of St. Andrews Church, Philadelphia, Author of "Pastor's Testimony," "Glimpses of the Old World," &c. &c. Philadelphia: W. J. & J. K. Simon. 12mo. pp. 352.

Claims of the Country on American Females. By Miss Coxe, Author of the "Young Lady's Companion," the "Wonders of the Deep,"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"The Infant Brother," &c. &c. Columbus: Isaac N. Whiting. 2 Vols. 12mo. pp. 243 and 243.

William Tell, the Patriot of Switzerland. Translated from the French of M. de Florian. Together with the Life of the Author. To which is added, Andreas Hofer, the "Tell" of the Tyrol. Illustrated with Engravings on Wood, by Butler. New York: Wiley & Putnam. 16mo. pp. 240.

A voice to the Married; being a Compendium of Social, Moral, and Religious Duties, addressed to Husbands and Wives. By John Mather Austin, Author of "A Voice to Youth." Albany: O. Hutchinson. 12mo. pp. 402.

Phrenological Chart, and Synopsis of the Mental Faculties, in Seven Degrees of Developement, Systematically Arranged, in Orders, Genera, and Species, with the Temperaments, and a Table of Admeasurements. By Dr. S. Z. Haven, Practical Phrenologist. Utica: O. Hutchinson. 12mo. pp. 40.

The Condition and Fate of England. By the Author of "The Glory and Shame of England." New York: J. & H. G. Langley. 2 vols. 12mo. pp. 278 and 307.

The Rights of Conscience and of Property: or, the True Issue of the Convent Question. By George Ticknor Curtis. Boston: Charles C. Little & James Brown. 8vo. pp. 39.

The Mechanic's Companion; or, the Elements and Practice of Carpentry, Joinery, Bricklaying, Masonry, Slating, Plastering, Painting, Smithing, and Turning; comprehending the Latest Improvements, and containing a full Description of the Tools belonging to each Branch of Business; with copious Directions for their Use. And an Explanation of the Terms used in each Art; also an Introduction to Practical Geometry. By Peter Nicholson. Illustrated with 40 Copperplate Engravings. Philadelphia: John Locken. 12mo. pp. 333.

The Lost Sister of Wyoming. An Authentic Narrative. By Rev. John Todd. Northampton: J. H. Butler. 12mo. pp. 160.

English Notes, intended for very Extensive Circulation. By Quarles Quickens, Esq. Boston: J. N. Bradley & Co. 4to. pp. 16.

A Concise History of the Efforts to obtain an Extension of Suffrage in Rhode-Island, from the Year 1811 to 1842. By Jacob Frieze. Providence: Benjamin F. Morse. 12mo. pp. 171.

A Treatise on Domestic Economy, for the Use of Young Ladies at Home, and at School. By Miss Catharine E. Beecher. Revised Edition, with numerous Additions, and Illustrative Engravings. Boston: Thomas H. Webb & Co. 12mo. pp. 383.

Letter of J. P. Kennedy to his Constituents, Citizens of the Fourth Congressional District in the State of Maryland, on the Principles and Value of the Protective System. 8vo. pp. 32.

Documents relating to the Ursuline Convent at Charlestown. Boston: Samuel N. Dickinson. 8vo. pp. 32.

Reception of Mr. Webster at Boston, September 30, 1842, with his Speech, delivered in Faneuil Hall, on the Occasion. Boston: Samuel N. Dickinson. 8vo. pp. 31.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MUSIC.

Glee Singer's Pocket Companion, consisting of Original Glees, Quartetts, Rounds, &c. Together with many Pieces from the most admired Composers. By J. B. Woodbury. Boston: Charles H. Keith. pp. 72.

Book of Chants; consisting mostly of Selections from the Sacred Scriptures, adapted to Appropriate Music, and arranged for Chanting. Designed for Congregational Use in Public or Social Worship. By Lowell Mason. Boston: J. H. Wilkins & R. B. Carter. 12mo. pp. 180.

The Vocal Guide, a First Book for Schools and Classes in Vocal Music, &c. &c. By William J. Edson. Boston: Saxton & Peirce. 12mo. pp. 168.

Anthem for Thanksgiving. Composed by Edward L. White. Boston: Kidder & Wright. 8vo. pp. 8.

An Improved Method of Instruction for the Piano Forte, consisting of a Progressive Course of Instruction on that Instrument. By Charles Jarvis, Professor of Music, Organist and Leader of the Choir at the Church of the Epiphany, and Editor of the Lady's Musical Library. Philadelphia: Godey & McMichael. 8vo. pp. 72.

The Washingtonian Harp, a Collection of Original Songs, adapted to Familiar Airs, and arranged to be sung either as Solos or Choruses; designed for the Use of Washingtonian Temperance Societies. By James H. Aikman. Boston: Saxton & Peirce. 12mo. pp. 72.

NOVELS, TALES, AND ROMANCES.

Tired of Housekeeping. By T. S. Arthur, Author of "Insubordination," "Six Nights with the Washingtonians," &c. &c. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 12mo. pp. 167.

Julia of Baiæ; or, the Days of Nero. A Story of the Martyrs. By the Author of "The Merchant's Daughter," "Virginia," "Christmas Bells," &c. &c. Boston: Saxton & Peirce. 12mo. pp. 260.

The Violated Sanctuary. A Temperance Tale. By Almira Seymour. Boston: William Henshaw. 16mo. pp. 127.

The True Lover's Fortune; or the Beggar of the Pont des Arts. Translated from the German. Boston: James Munroe & Co. 8vo. pp. 91.

The Wing and Wing, or Le Feu-Follet; a Tale. By the Author of the "Pilot," "Red Rover," "Two Admirals," "Homeward Bound," &c. Philadelphia: Lea & Blanchard. 2 vols. 12mo. pp. 235 and 207.

The Salem Belle. A Tale of 1692. Boston: Tappan & Dennet. 12mo. pp. 238.

The Career of Puffer Hopkins. By Cornelius Matthews, Author of the "Motley Book," "Behemoth," "Wakondah," &c. Illustrated by H. K. Brown, Esq. (Phiz.) New York: D. Appleton & Co. 8vo. pp. 319.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ORATIONS AND ADDRESSES.

An Address delivered at Lenox, on the First of August, 1842, the Anniversary of Emancipation in the British West Indies. By William E. Channing. Lenox: J. G. Stanley. 8vo. pp. 38.

Moral Education. A Lecture delivered at New Bedford, August 16, 1842, before the American Institute of Instruction. By George B. Emerson, President of the Institute. Published by a Vote of the Institute. Boston: William B. Fowle. 8vo. pp. 16.

Address to the Norfolk County Temperance Society, at their Meeting at Quincy, September 29, 1842. By John Quincy Adams. Boston: Gould, Kendall, & Lincoln. 8vo. pp. 24.

Address delivered before the Harvard Musical Association, in the Chapel of the University, at Cambridge, Aug. 24, 1842. By William W. Story. Printed at the Request of the Society. Boston: S. N. Dickinson. 8vo. pp. 24.

Intemperance among Literary Men. An Address, delivered before the Portland Young Men's Total Abstinence Society, on Sunday Evening, July 31, in the Park Street Church. By J. Bannatyne. Portland: A Shirley & Son. 8vo. pp. 24.

Uncas and Miantonomoh, an Historical Discourse, delivered at Norwich, Conn., on the Fourth Day of July, 1842, on the Occasion of the Erection of a Monument to the Memory of Uncas, the White Man's Friend, and First Chief of the Mohegans. By William L. Stone, Author of the "Life of Brant," "Life and Times of Red Jacket," &c. &c. New York: Dayton & Newman. 12mo. pp. 209.

Address delivered by William J. Sykes, Esq. on the 29th October, 1842, before the Mechanics' Debating Society of Huntsville, on the Claims and Duties of Mechanics and other Laboring Men. P. Woodson, Jr. 8vo. pp. 8.

Address of John Quincy Adams to his Constituents of the Twelfth Congressional District, at Braintree, September 17th, 1842. Boston: J. H. Eastburn. 8vo. pp. 63.

Import and Value of the Popular Lecturing of the Day. A Discourse pronounced before the Literary Societies of the University of Vermont, August 3, 1842. By Calvin Pease. Published at the Request of the Societies. Burlington: Chauncey Goodrich. 8vo. pp. 41.

The Professions; an Oration, delivered before the Literary Societies of Marshall College, Mercersburg, Pennsylvania, at their Anniversary, September 27, 1842. By George W. Burnap. Baltimore: John Murphy. 8vo. pp. 31.

The Teacher's Calling; an Address delivered before the Maryland Institute of Education, September 24th, 1842. By S. F. Streeter. Baltimore: John Murphy. 8vo. pp. 23.

An Address, delivered before the Society of Alumni of Randolph-Macon College, on the 7th of June, 1842. By Thomas M. Isbell, A. M., of Cumberland County, Va. Published by the Request of the Society. Lynchburg: Tolar, Towley, & Statham. 8vo. pp. 15.

An Address, delivered before the Goethean Literary Society of Marshall College, at its Anniversary, August 29, 1842. By John W. Nevin, D. D. Published by the Society. Chambersburg, Pa. 8vo. pp. 22.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

POETRY AND THE DRAMA.

Poems on Slavery. By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Cambridge: John Owen. 16mo. pp. 31.

Pleasant Memories of Pleasant Lands. By Mrs. L. H. Sigourney. Boston: James Munroe & Co. 16mo. pp. 368.

This little volume is made up of pieces suggested by the author's visit to places of historic or poetic interest in Europe. They are accompanied by brief explanatory passages in prose. Most of the verses are correct and graceful; and, altogether, the volume is pleasant reading. It is handsomely printed, and embellished with an engraving of Abbotsford. In the course of the volume, the author takes occasion to pay warm-hearted tributes to the great living authors of England. The only thing objectionable in this, is the publication of some passages from private letters, — one from Miss Mitford, for example, in which she describes her aged father, beautifully indeed, but in such a way, as to show plainly enough, that the letter was wholly one of private friendship, and would have been very differently written, had the remotest suspicion of print occurred to Miss Mitford's mind. This letting the public into the secrets of friendly correspondence is, we fear, an unpleasant peculiarity of Americans. It ought to be corrected.

Mrs. Sigourney writes smoothly and easily. Her style is pure, though not vigorous, and the sentiments of her poetry are always good, generous, and elevated.

The Age of Gold, and Other Poems. By George Lunt. Boston: W. D. Ticknor. 16mo. pp. 160.

"The Age of Gold" is a vigorous didactic and satirical poem on the times. It is written in the good old heroic couplet of Dryden and Pope. Mr. Lunt has mastered well the fine movement of this species of verse, which most poets of the present age have deserted for other kinds. This poem contains many excellently pointed couplets, several finished and brilliant descriptions, and a vein of thought strongly and clearly brought out, and weighty in its character. The description of the sturdy forester, in the first book, is a very nervous passage, nimble and hitting in style, and well points the moral of the mad speculations, which have brought such deep dishonor upon the country. We copy the touching conclusion of the poem.

"Thus runs the lay; and now the lyre is broke;
Fled the sweet spell that all its impulse woke;
No more I strive to string the shattered chords,
Or fling its music round my faltering words:
Thou, thou art dead! In vain, in vain I hear
Hope's whisper chide the unavailing tear;
Alas, what voice that sorrow shall restrain
Which weeps for ever since it weeps in vain!
Oh, what avails, though all the world approve,
The verse, that only flowed to meet thy love, —
Thy love, that cheered each task my heart begun,
And well rewarded every labor done!
The living spirit and the soul of thought,
Whose heart corrected all that genius taught;
Whose generous mind, fresh with immortal youth,
Each thought a virtue and each impulse truth,
With every goodness every charm could blend,
Till half forgot the lover in the friend;
By nature's dowry sweet with every grace,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Yet found content in life's sequestered place;
The guileless path of simple wisdom trod,
Whose flowers of heaven allure the way to God;
In modest worth shrank backward from the throng,
And lived the lowly doctrine of my song!
From thee each charm my inspiration caught,
Prompted by thee the lay; and I, that thought
To dedicate it to thy living heart,
Lay it upon thy bier! Henceforth apart
Scarce seem the portals of the earth and sky,
Since such as thou could live and love and die."

— pp. 52, 53.

The rest of the volume is made up of shorter pieces; songs, hymns, lyrics, of various degrees of merit, but, in general, carefully finished.

The Maid of the Doe; a Lay of the Revolution. By an United States' Man. New York: Samuel Colman. 12mo. pp. 260.

Thulia; a Tale of the Antarctic. By J. C. Palmer, U. S. N. New York: Samuel Colman. 8vo. pp. 72.

The subject of Thulia is the adventures of the schooner Flying-Fish in the late American Exploring Expedition. The extraordinary scenes through which this little vessel passed, the perils of the Antarctic Ocean, the terrible sublimity of fields of ice, and mountains gleaming with dazzling hues, — the tempests, in those otherwise silent regions, of driving sleet and snow, — furnish magnificent subjects for a true poet, and as novel as they are magnificent. We cannot say that Mr. Palmer has shown himself equal to his subject, in his poetry, though that is not destitute of felicitous passages, and striking lines. The prose Appendix to the volume, made up from the journals of the Flying-Fish, is far more poetical, and more interesting, than the verses.

What can be the meaning of the comparison in this couplet?

"And Night comes groping through the haze,
Like guilty ghost in cerements dim."

Ghosts commonly dress in white. Perhaps, in the snow-clad regions of the frozen zone, they have to change their color, as Pompey's ghost had to appear in the day-time, "because he would not show at night."

The following stanza is both feeble and affected;

"Here Thulia lies a bank of snow;
Each sail hung round with gelid frill;
Festooned with frost her graceful prow;
And every rope an icicle."

The volume is beautifully printed, and embellished with several spirited engravings.

Fables of La Fontaine; translated from the French by Elizur Wright. Third Edition.

Having already noticed at some length this meritorious work, on its first appearance, we merely refer to it now, to express our satisfaction at the manner in which it has been received on both sides of the Atlantic. The present edition is a cheap reprint, designed for "general circulation," — the former being a costly work, and necessarily limited by that circumstance. The wood-cuts in this edition are very well done. We cordially commend it to what the newspapers call "a discerning public." We have lately compared it, in part, with the *first* English poetical version of the whole of La Fontaine's Fables, by Robert Thomson, published at Basil, in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

1805, and apparently little known to English readers. And though we cannot assert, as seems to be thought by some, that our ingenious countryman has been the first to extend the bounds of English literature to this point, we have great pleasure in saying, that we think his version better in most particulars, than that of the English scholar, whose merit is by no means inconsiderable, and of whose labors Mr. Wright was wholly unapprized.

THEOLOGY AND SERMONS.

The Widow directed to the Widow's God. By John Angell James. With an Introduction. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 12mo. pp. 205.

Remains of Rev. Joshua Wells Downing, A. M., Late of the New England Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. With a brief Memoir. Edited by Elijah H. Downing, A. M. New York: G. Lane & P. P. Sanford. 12mo. pp. 329.

Universalism Examined, Renounced, Exposed, in a Series of Lectures, embracing the Experience of the Author, during a Ministry of 12 Years, and the Testimony of Universalist Ministers to the Dreadful Moral Tendency of their Faith. By Matthew Hale Smith. Boston: Tappan & Dennet. 12mo. pp. 396.

Evidence from Scripture and History, of the Second Coming of Christ, about the Year 1843; Exhibited in a Course of Lectures. By William Miller. Boston: Joshua V. Himes. 12mo. pp. 300.

Theopneuston, or Select Scriptures Considered. By Samuel Hanson Cox, D. D., Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn, N. Y. Adapted to be useful to Bible Classes, Sabbath School Teachers, and other careful Readers of the Word of God. New York: Dayton & Newman. 12mo. pp. 180.

A Discourse on the Covenant with Judas, Preached in Hollis Street Church, Nov. 6, 1842. By John Pierpont. Boston: Charles C. Little & James Brown. 8vo. pp. 39.

The New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; Translated out of the Original Greek, and with the Former Translations diligently Compared and Revised; with Brief Explanatory Notes. By Jacob and John S. C. Abbott. Boston: Crocker & Brewster. 12mo. pp. 586.

A Critical and Historical Interpretation of the Prophecies of Daniel. By Nathaniel S. Folsom. Boston: Crocker & Brewster. 12mo. pp. 231.

Ἡ Καινὴ Διαθήκη. Novum Testamentum Græcè. Post Ioh. Aug. Henr. Tittmannum olim Prof. Lips. ad Fidem Optimorum Librorum secundis curis recognovit, Lectionumque Varietatem notavit, Augustus Hahn, in Acad. Vratisl. Prof. Editio Americana Stereotypa, curante Edward Robinson, S. T. D. Neo-Eboraci: Leavitt & Trow. 12mo. pp. 508.

Dissertation on the Prophecies relative to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. By George Duffield, Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Detroit. New York: Dayton & Newman. 12mo. pp. 434.

A Pictorial and Descriptive View of all Religions. To which is added, a Brief View of Minor Sects; on the Basis of the Celebrated and Splendid Work of Bernard Picart. Illustrated with 73 Engravings. Also a History of the Jews, and Life of Mohammed. By Rev.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Charles A. Goodrich, A. M., accompanied by a Map of the World and Chart, Exhibiting the Progress of the Gospel in the last 18 Centuries; the Religions of the Several Nations on the Globe, with their Population, Extent, and Missionary Stations. By J. Olney, A. M. Hartford: Sumner & Goodman. 12mo. pp. 576.

A Discourse in Memory of John Abbot Emery, Member of the Senior Class in Harvard University; delivered in the Chapel, Nov. 6, 1842. By William B. O. Peabody, Minister in Springfield. Cambridge: John Owen. 8vo. pp. 20.

An Address delivered at the Funeral of Rev. William Ellery Channing, D. D., in the Federal Street Meeting House, October 7, 1842. Also, a Sermon delivered in the Federal Street Meeting House, in Boston, October 9, 1842, the Sunday after the Death. By Ezra S. Gannett. Published by Request. Boston: W. Crosby & Co. 8vo. pp. 41 and 32.

A Discourse, occasioned by the Death of William Ellery Channing. Preached in Hollis Street Church, Oct. 16, 1842. By John Pierpont. Boston: Oliver Johnson. 12mo. pp. 23.

A Sermon preached in Amory Hall, October 9th, 1842, being the Sunday succeeding the Death of William Ellery Channing. By James Freeman Clarke. Boston: Benjamin H. Greene. 12mo. pp. 20.

An Humble Tribute to the Memory of William Ellery Channing, D. D. A Sermon preached at West Roxbury, October 9th, 1842. By Theodore Parker, Minister of the Second Church in Roxbury. Printed by Request. Boston: Charles C. Little & James Brown. 8vo. pp. 38.

A Sermon delivered at the Ordination of Rev. Frederick D. Huntington, as Pastor of the South Congregational Church in Boston, October 19, 1842. By George Putnam, Minister of the First Church in Roxbury. Boston: William Crosby & Co. 8vo. pp. 40.

A Sermon Preached in the Meeting House of the Harvard Church and Society in Charlestown, on Sunday, October 9, 1842, on occasion of the Death of Rev. William Ellery Channing, D. D. By George E. Ellis, Pastor of that Church. Printed by Request, for the Society. Boston: William Crosby & Co. 8vo. pp. 24.

A Discourse, occasioned by the Death of William Ellery Channing; delivered in the First Congregational Church, Providence, R. I., October 12, 1842. By Edward B. Hall. Published by Request. Providence: B. Cranston & Co. 8vo. pp. 34.

A Discourse, occasioned by the Death of William Ellery Channing, D. D. Pronounced before the Unitarian Societies of New York and Brooklyn, in the Church of the Messiah, October 13th, 1842. By Henry W. Bellows. Published by Request. New York: Charles S. Francis & Co. 8vo. pp. 28.

Sermons of Consolation. By F. W. P. Greenwood, D. D., Minister of King's Chapel, Boston. Boston: Charles C. Little & James Brown. 12mo. pp. 335.

It is not our custom to comment upon works in this department, but we cannot deny ourselves the gratification of expressing, in a word, our sense of the exceeding beauty of these discourses of Dr. Greenwood. It is a great privilege that those have enjoyed, who, in past times, have listened to such lessons of mature and intellectual piety; and now that sickness

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

has withdrawn the preacher from active service, he takes a most welcome method to deepen and perpetuate the impression, at the same time that its benefit is extended to others besides those who had received it from his own persuasive lips. The following passage, which is not distinguished above many others in the volume, may serve to give some idea of the faultless grace of the style, and the charm of the poetical coloring with which the author's genius can invest even familiar thoughts. It occurs in a discourse entitled "Christ with us at Evening."

"Let us call to mind some of the characters and accompaniments of the natural evening, and mark how the presence of Christ and his religion harmonizes with them, and exalts them.

"Peace comes with evening. It is a gentle and a soothing season. But the peace of Christ, abiding with us, will make it yet more peaceful; because it is the answer of the internal to the external; the quietness of the bosom rendering more profound and grateful the quietness of the atmosphere, of the land, and of the ocean; and because it alone can give security against the fears of darkness, the disturbances and alarms of night. It is a peace which corrects all that harshness of our humanity, which is apt to disturb with its dissonance the repose of nature, or render us impenetrable to its influences.

"The soft, broad shadows come with evening. They close round us as if they would envelope and shade the spirit, too much heated and wearied before, giving it time for restoration. But how much safer and more quiet is the spirit, if, by the side of the Son of God, it claims a higher protection, and takes refuge under the shadow of the Almighty.

"The dews come with evening. They gather coolly on the drooping leaves, and stand in refreshing drops on all the panting flower-cups, and on every blade of grass; but it is only the Christian, only he who places his hope in Christ, and with whom Christ is abiding, who can tell with what a reviving efficacy the dews of heavenly grace fall down upon the drooping soul.

"The bright stars come out with evening. Splendidly they shine, and solemnly, those mighty orbs, — so far away that every beam from them, with all its swiftness, has required years for its journey hither; — but with a more intelligent brightness will they shine, if Christ be with us, to lead our adoring thoughts to the Almighty Father who feeds them with their light, and has prepared a place yet more elevated and more glorious than theirs, in which his redeemed children shall dwell with him for ever.

"Sleep comes with evening. But let us not lie down, as do the flocks and herds in the fields, without a prayer to him who sends us slumber; for we are capable of religion, and they are not. Sweetly will sleep fall upon our eyelids, if we have been holding communion with our Saviour in heavenly-mindedness, and, as if we heard from him the words of kind permission, 'sleep on now, and take your rest,' we can commend ourselves in confidence to the Watchman of Israel." — pp. 328 – 330.

VOYAGES AND TRAVELS.

Rambles in Yucatan; or, Notes of Travel through the Peninsula, including a Visit to the Remarkable Ruins of Chi-Chen, Kabah, Zayi, and Uxmal. With numerous Illustrations. By B. M. Norman. New York: J. & H. G. Langley. Boston: Saxton & Peirce. 8vo. pp. 304.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED